Here begynneth the Egloges of Alexander Barclay, prest, wherof the first the conteineth the miseries of courters and courtes, of all Princes in generall. The matter wherof was translated into Englysshe by the saied Alexander in forme of dialoges, out of a boke named in latin, *Miserie curialium*, compiled by Eneas Siluius Poete and Oratour; which after was Pope of Rome, and named Pius. In the whyche the interloquutors be, Cornix, & Coridon.

The famous Poetes, with the Muses nyne,
With wyt inspired, fresh, pregnant & diuyne.
Say boldly, indite, in style substanciall:
Some in poemes, hye and heroicall.
Some them deliteth, in heuy Tragedies:
And some, in wanton or mery Comedies.
Some, in Satiers, agayne vices dare carpe:
Some, in sweete songes, accordant with the harpe,
And eche of these all, had laude and excellence:
After their reason, and style of eloquence.
Who, in fayre speache, coulde briefely comprehende:
Most fruitful matter, men dyd him most cõmende.
And who were fruitlesse, and in speache superflue:
Men by their writyng, straytly set a que.
Therfore, wyse Poetes, to sharpe & proue their wyt:
In homely ieastes, wrote many a merykyt.
Before they durst be, of audacitie:
Tauenture thynges, of weyght and grauitie.
In this same maner, the famous Teocrite:
First, in Siracuse, attempted for to wryte.
Certayne Eglogues, or speaches Pastorall:
Inducyng Shepherdes, men, homely and rurall.
Which in playne language, accordyng to their name:
Had sondry talkyng, some in myrth and game.
Sometyme, of thynges, more lyke to grauitie:
And not excedyng, their small capacitie.
Most noble Virgil, after him, long whyle,
Wrote also Egloges, after lyke maner style.
His wyttes prouyng, in matters Pastorall:
Or he durst ventre, to style Heroicall.
And in lyke maner now, lately in our dayes:
Hathe other Poetes, attempted the same wayes.
As the most famous, Baptist Mantuan:

The best of that sorte, synce Poetes first began,
And Frances Petrarke, also in Italy,
In lyke maner style, wrote playne and merily.
What shall I speake, of the father auncient:
Which in breke language, both playne & eloquent:
Betwene Alathea, Scustis, stout and bolde:
Hath made rehersall, of all the stories olde.
By true histories, vs teachyng to abiect:
Agaynst vayne fables, of olde Gentyles sect.
Besyde all these, yet fynde I many mo:
Which hath employed, their diligence also.
Betwene Shepheardes, as it were but a fable:
To write of matters, both true and profitable.
But all their names, I purpose not to write,
Which in this maner, made bookes infinite.
Now to my purpose, their workes worthy fame:
Dyd my yong age, my herte greatly inflame.
Dull slouth to eschew, my selfe to exercise:
In suche small matters. or I durst enterprise.
To hyer matter, lyke as these chyldren do:
Whiche first vse to crepe, and afterwarde to go.
The byrde vnused, first flyyng from her nest:
Dare not aduenture, and is not bolde nor prest:
With wynges a brode, to flye as doth the olde:
For vse and custome, causeth all thynges be bolde.
And lytell conning, by crafte and exercyse:
To perfecte science, causeth a man to ryse.
But eare the Paynter, can sure his crafte attayne,
Muche frowarde facion, transformeth he in vayne.
But rasyng superflue, and addyng, that doth he want:
Rude pictures is made, both perfect and pleasant.
So, where I in youth, a certain warke began:
And not concluded, as ofte doth many a man.

yet

Yet thought I after, to make the same parfyte:
But long I myssed, that which I first dyd wryte.
But heare a wonder, .xl. yere saue twayne,
Procedyng in age, founde my first youth agayne.
To fynde youth in age, is a probleme diffuse:
But now heare the truthe, & then no longer muse.
As I late tourned, olde bookes to and fro:
One lytle treatyse, I founde among the mo.
Bicause that in youth, I dyd compile the same:
Egloges of youth, I called it by name.
And seyng some men, haue in the same delyte:
At their great instance, I made the same parfyte.
Addyng and batyng, where I perceyued neade:
All them desyring, which shall this treatyse reade.
Not to be greued, with my playne sentence,
Rudely conueyed, for lacke of eloquence.
It were not sittyng, a heardе or man rurall,
To speake in termes, gay and rethoricall.
So teacheth Orace, in arte of Poetry,
That writers namely, their reason should apply.
Meete speache appropryng, to euery personage:
After his estate, behauour, wyt, and age.
But if that any woulde, now to me abiect,
That this my labor, shalbe of small effect.
And to the reader, not greatly profitable,
And by that manner, as bayne and repreueable.
Bicause it maketh, onely relacion,
Of Shepheardes manner, and disputacion.
If any suche reade, my treatyse to the ende,
He shall well perceyue, if he therto entende.
That it conteyneth, both laudes and vertue,
And man enformeth, misliuyng to eschue.
With diuers bourdes, and sentences morall:

Closed in shadow, of speaches Pastorall.
As many Poetes, as I haue sayde before:
Haue vsed long tyme, before that I was borne.
But of their writyng, though I ensue the rate,
No name I chalenge, of Poete Laureate.
That name, vnto them, is meete, and dothe agree:
Which writeth matters, with curiositee.
Myne habite blacke, accordeth not with greene:
Blacke, betokeneth death, as it is daily seene.
The greene, is pleasaunt, fresh, lust, and iolitie:
These two, in nature, hath great diuersitie.
Then, who wouide ascribe, excepte he were a foole,
The pleasaunt Lauret, vnto the mournyng coole.
Another rewarde, abydeth my labor:
The glorious syght, of God my Sauior.
Which is cheife Shepherde, and head of other all:
To him, for succour, in this my warke, I call.
And not on Clio, nor olde Melpomene:
My hope is fixed, of him ayded to be.
That he, me direct, my mynde for to expresse:
That he, to good ende, my wyt and pen addresse.
For to accomplysh, my purpose and entent:
To the laude and pleasure, of God omnipotent.
And to the profyte, the pleasure and the meede:
Of al them which shal, this treatise heare & reade.
But to the reader, now to retourne agayne:
Fyrst, of this thyng, I wyll thou be certayne.
That .x. Egloges, this holetreatyse dothe holde:
To imitate, of other Poetes olde.
In which Egloges, Shepherdes thou mayst see,
In homely language, not passyng their degree.
Some disputyng, of Courtly Misery:
Sometyme, of Venus deceatfull tiranny.

Some-

Sometyme, commendyng lone, honeſt, and laudable
Sometyme, diſpiſyng loue, falſe deceauable.
Sometyme, diſpiſyng, and blamyng auarice:
Sometyme excityng, vertue to exercyſe.
Sometyme, of warre, abhorryng the outrage:
And of the ſame tyme, the manifolde damage.
And other matters, as after ſhall appeare:
To their great pleaſure, whiche ſhal them reade or (heare.

¶ The Prologue of the firſt Eglege.

TWo ſimple Shepheardes, met on a certayne day:
The one well aged, with lockes hoare & gray:
Which after labours, and worldly buſyneſſe,
Concluded to lyue, in reſt and quietneſſe.
yet nought had he kepte, to kynde him cloth nor foode:
At diuers holes, his heare grew thorough his hoode
A ſtyffe patched kelte, hangyng ouer his eyen:
His coſtly clothyng, was thrydbare kendall green.
His patched Cockers, ſcant reached to his knee:
In the ſyde of his kelte, there ſtake a ſpone of tree.
A bottell, his cote, on the one ſyde had torne:
For hangyng, the eare, was neare in ſonder worne.
In his one hande alway, his pype he bare:
Wherof the ſounde, releaſed him of his care.
His wallet, with bread and cheſe, ſo than he ſtoode:
A hooke in his hande, in myddes of all his goode.
Saue that he boaſted to haue experience,
Of worldly thynges, by practyſe and ſcience.
Him ſelfe he called, Cornix, by his name:
The other Shepheardе, was lyke vnto the ſame.
Saue only that he, had lyued all his dayes:

In

In kepyng his folde, and seene no farther wayes.
yet was he to syght, a stoute and lusty freake:
And as he boasted, he borne was in the Deake.
Coridon by name, his neybours dyd him call:
Him selfe counted, the stoutest of them all.
This Coridon swore, and sayde to Cornix sure,
That he no longer, wolde there, that lyfe endure.
In wretched labor, and styll in pouertee:
But to the Citie, he sayde, that go woulde he.
Or els to the Courte, and there, with some abyde:
Tyll tyme that Fortune, wold better lyfe prouyde.
By whiche mocion, Cornix sheweth plainly,
Of Courte and Courters, the care and misery.

¶ The first Eglogue, of the Miserys and Maners of the Courte and Courters: the Shepheardes Interloquutors or commeners in the same Eglogue, by Coridon and Cornix.

☞ Coridon first speaketh.

FOr sothe frende Cornix, nought can my hert make lyght,
When I remembre, the stormes of yester nyght.
The thunder, & lyghtenyng, tempest, and the hayle:
Hathe plainly wasted, our profite and auayle.
The fearfull thunder, with greuous clap and sounde:
Our corne hath beaten doune, flat vnto the grounde
With tempest after, and violence of rayne:
That it, as I doubt, shal neuer ryse againe.
The haile hath beaten our shepe, within the folde,
That all befebled, as well the yong, as the olde.
Our mylke is tourned, and waxed pale and soure,
The stormie and tempest, vpon our couches poure.

Our

Our flocke and fieldes, is all our hole riches,
Whiche still is subiecte, to suche vnhappinesse.
For after that we, haue done both cost and paine,
One sodein tempest, destroieth all againe.
Then farewel welfare, worse chaūce we nede not fere
Saue onely to sowke our clawes, with the beare.
The Citezins, haue great treasure likerly,
In cofers closed, voyde of Jeopardy.
Theyr coynes cowched faste, vnder locke and key,
Frome place to place, they maie the same conuey.
When thei of the theues, perceiue the dyn and sound,
But styll must our corne remaine vpon the groūd.
Abydyng stormes, haile, thunder, and tempest,
Tyll that it be, for sikyll rype and prest.
As for theyr riches no thunder, frost nor hayle,
No storme nor tempest, can hurt or disauaile.
Suche carefull chances, and suche aduersitee,
Vs alwaie kepeth, in wretched pouertee.

Cornix answereth.

O Corydon my mate, I sweare so haue I blysse,
Thou plainly speakest, lyke as the mattier is.
But as for my parte, my mynde, and wyt is blynde,
To know who gydeth al weather, storme & wynde.
But this thyng I knowe, but yet not perfectly,
Yet bold dare I be, to speake to the plainely.
For yf that I spake it, in some audience,
Some men wolde maligne, and take it for offence.
If god (as men saie) doeth heauen and earth sustain,
Than why doeth not he, regarde our daily payne.
Our greuous labour, he iustly might deuyde,
And for vs wretches, some better lyfe pronide.
Some nought doeth labour, and liueth pleasantly,
Though all hys reason to vices he apply.

But see with what sweat, what busines and paine,
Our symple liuyng, we labour to obtayne.
Beholde what ylles the shepherdes must endure,
For flocke and howsholde, bare liuyng to procure.
In feruent heat, we must intende our folde,
And in the wynter, almost we frese for colde.
Upon the harde grounde, or on the flyntes browne,
We sleape, when other lye on a bed of downe.
A thousande ylles of dangier, and sickenesse,
With diuers sores, doeth our beastes oppresse.
A thousande perys, and mo, if they were tolde,
Daily, and nightly, inuadeth our poore folde.
Sometyme the wolfe, our beastes doeth deuour,
And sometyme the theefe, awaiteth for his hour.
Or elles the soudiour, much worse, thē wolfe or theefe,
Against all our flocke, inrageth with myscheefe.
See how my handes, are with many a gall,
And stiffe as a borde, by worke continuall.
My face all scurfy, my colour pale and wan,
My head all parched, and blacke as any pan.
My bearde lyke bristelles, so that a plyant leke,
With a litel might, maie thrust me thorow ỹ cheke.
And as a stockefysshe, wrinkeled is my skyn,
Such is the profite, whiche I by labour wyn.
But this my labour, shulde greue me much the lesse,
If rest or pleasure, come of my busines.
But one sodaine storme, of thunder, haile, or rayne,
Againe all wasteth, wherfore I toke this payne.
This is the reward, the dede, and warke deuyne,
Unto whose auters, poore shepherdes incline.
To offer tapers, and candels we are faine,
And for our offryng, lo, this we haue againe.
I can not declare, what pitee, and mercy,

Wrappeth

Mrappeth vs wretches, in this harde mysery.
But this wote I well, it is bothe right and mede,
There most to socour, where doeth apere most nede.

¶ Corydon.

¶ Hothere frende Cornix, thou wadest now to farre,
Thy selfe forgettyng, thou leapest ouer the barre.
Smal is my knowlege, thou many a thyng hast sene,
Yet out of the waie, forsothe I see the clene.
The kyng of heauen, is mercifull and iust,
And them al helpeth, which put in hym their trust.
When we deserue, he stryketh not alwaie,
This in the pulpete, harde I syr Peter saie.
yet oft he striketh, when man is obstinate,
And by no meanes, wyll his mischiuyng hate.
So all these plages, and inconuenience,
Faules on vs wretches, onely for our offence.

¶ Cornix.

¶ For what offences, thou art madde so to saie,
Were we of ỳ sorte, which dyd our lorde betraie.
Or that consented, our lorde to crucify,
We neuer were suche, thy selfe can testify.

¶ Corydon.

¶ Now trust me surely, though ye be neuer so wrouth,
I nought shall abashe, to the to saie the trouth.
Though we shepherdes, be out of company,
Without occasyon, we lyue vnhappely.
Seke well amonge vs, and plainely thou shalt see,
Theft, braulyng, malyce, disorde, iniquitee.
Mrathe, lechery, lesyng, enuy, and couetise,
And breuely to speake truely, we want no vice.

¶ Cornix.

¶ What nay man pardy, all we doo not offence,
yet all haue sorow, without all difference.

Saie nought man but trouth, do god nothyng deserue
Without difference, yet be all like to sterue.

¶ Corydon.

¶ What, ceasse man for shame, thou art of reasō scant
The wyse, now must learne wyt, of the ignorant.
I haue no knowledge, saue onely of my tarre,
yet this I perceaue, man shulde not seke to farre.
In goddes workes, he all doeth for the best,
If thou fyndest here no easement, welth ne rest.
What then, seke further, for plainly so shall I,
In some place, fortune beholdeth merely.
I byde no lenger by saint Thomas of kent:
In such bare places, wherfore euery day is lent.
The kreers haue store, in some daie of the weke,
But euery daie, our meate is for to seke.
I nought haue to dye, begge can I not for shame:
Except that I were b.ynde, impotent or lame.
If suche a gadlyng as I, shulde begge or craue,
Of me suche mercy, and pitee wolde men haue.
That they for almes (I sweare by goddes sockes)
In euery towne, wold make me scoure the stockes.
That can one Drome, by many assaies tell,
With that yll science, I purpose not to mell.
Here nothyng I haue, wherfore I nede to care:
Now Cornix adiew, streight forward wil I fare.

¶ Cornix.

¶ Straight forwarde man, hey Benedicitee,
All other people haue as great care as we.
Onely bare nede, is all our paine and wo,
But these towne dwellers, haue many paines mo.
Our paine is pleasure, nere in comparison,
Of their great ylles and sore veration.
Of all suche thynges, haue I experience,

Than

Then maiest thou surely, geue to me credence.
Whether wilt thou go, to lyue more quietly.
Man, all the worlde, is full of misery.

Corydon.

What man, the court is freshe, and full of ease,
I can drawe a bowe, I shal some lorde there please.
Thy selfe can reporte, how I can bydes kyll,
Myne arow toucheth of them, nothyng but the byl.
I hurte no flesshe, nor bruse no parte at all.
Were not my shotyng, our liuyng were but small.
Lo here a sparowe, lo here be thrushes fower,
All these I haue kylled, this daie within an houre.
I can daunce the raye, I can bothe pype and syng,
If I were mery, I can bothe hurle and slyng.
I ronne, I wrastell, and can well throw the barre,
No sheapherde throweth, the axeltree so farre.
If I were mery, I coulde well leape and spryng,
I were a man mete, to serue a prynce or kyng.
Wherfore to the court, now wyll I get me plaine,
Adew swete Cornix, farewell yet ones againe.
Prouyde for thy selfe, so shall I doo for me.

Cornix.

Doo awaie Corydon, for goddes loue let be,
Nought els is the court, but euen the deuyls mowth,
And place most careful, of east, west, north, & sowth
For thy longe seruyce, there nede shall be thy hyre,
Out of the water, thou leapest into the fyre.
We lyue in sorowe, I wyll it not deny.
But in the court is the well of mysery.

Corydon.

What man thou seest, and in lykewyse see I,
That lusty courters go alway Iolely.
They haue no labour, yet are they well besene,

Barded, and garded, in pleasant white and grene.
Thei doo nought elles, but reuell, slepe, and drynke,
But on his koldes, the poore shepherde must thinke.
They rest, we labour, thei gayly decked be,
Whyle we go ragged by nede and pouertee.
Theyr colour lusty, they byde no storme nor shours,
They haue the pleasures, but all the payne is ours.
Thei haue all thynges, but we wretches haue nought,
Thei sing, thei daūce, while we sore sigh for thought
But what bryngeth them to this prosperitee,
Strength, cowrage, krendes, craft and audacitee.
If I had krendes, I haue all thyng beside,
Whiche might in court, a rowme for me prouyde.
But syth courters haue this lyfe continually,
They haue all pleasure, and nought of mysery.

Coznix.

Not so Corydon, oft vnder yalowe lockes,
Be hyd kowle scabbes, and kareful krenche pockes.
Their reuyld shyrtes, of clothe, whyte, softe, & thyn,
Oft tymes cloketh, a kowle and scurfy skyn.
And where we labour, in warkes profitable,
They labour sorer in warke abhominable.
They maie haue shame, to set so vp and downe,
When thei be dettours, for doublet, hose, & gowne.
And in the tauerne remaine thei last for lagge,
Whan neuer a crosse, is in their courtly bagge.
They crake, they boste, and baunt as thei were wood,
And most whan thei syt, in myddes of others good.
Nought haue the wretches, saue care and mysery,
Who hath it proued, all courtyng shall defy.

Corydon.

Mary syr by this, I see experience,
That thou in the court, hath kept some residence.

Coznix

¶ Cornix.

¶ Remembrynge of court, the payne continual,
I thynk these paynes, but easy, short, and small.
So the remembraunce, of greuous care and payne
Causeth me gladly this hardnesse to sustayne.
Who that hath lyued in court, I the assure,
In stede of pleasure maie this our lyke endure.
Our nede is eased, with pleasaunt libertee,
Their care is heaped, with harde captiuitee.
I thought our lyuyng care and veracion,
Before (of the court) or thou made mencyon.

¶ Corydon.

¶ If the court be suche, as thou doest plainly tell,
I thynke it foly, with it to deale or mell.
Better is frewyll, with nede and pouertee,
Than nede in the court, with harde captiuitee.
But tell me Cornix, I praie the instantly,
How knowest thou fyrst, this geare so perfytly.

¶ Cornix.

¶ While I in youth, in Croidon towne dyd dwell.
Often to the court, I coles brought to sell.
And then I lerned and noted parfytly,
Of court, and courters, the care and mysery.
For I lurked, and none regarded me,
Tyll I had knowlege, of hye and lowe degre.
What was their maner, behauour and vsage,
The more I tarryed, more sawe I of outrage.

¶ Corydon.

¶ Then farewell courtyng, I se thou counte st best,
Here to remaine, in symple welth and rest.
But in meane season, I praie the hartely,
Declare me all hole, the courtly misery.
Beholde, our weathers lye chewyng of the cudde,

Here

Here is no parell, of water dyke, nor mudde.
Slouth loueth slombryng muche slepe is reprouable,
But mery talkyng, is greatly confortable.
Here is colde shadowe, here is a clere fountaine,
When wordes greueth, drynke and begynne again.
For long tyme passed, I haue herd of thy lore,
Which thyng me moueth, to here ẏ talke the more.
Begynne and shewe me, the courtes wretchednesse,
So I parchaunce, shall set therby the lesse.
And where long talkyng, oft greueth many a man,
I shall the furnyshe, with wordes now and than.
What saie on Cornix, why arte thou now so styll,
Thy wyt and reason, was wont to be at wyll.

¶ Cornix answered.

¶ Faine wold I common, for pleasure and pastyme,
But trouth is cōmitted, most greuo⁹ faut or crime.
And some might me here, which by their wordes sour,
Might bryng me in court, in greuous displesoure.
Because I shal proue all thē, which court doeth haūt,
Miserable fooles, madde men, and ignoraunt.
Therfore Coridon, amonge the bowes prye,
If there lurke any Jay, sterlyng, thrushe, or pye.
To note my wordes, and chat them forth agayne,
Wherby I myght wyn displeasure, losse, or payne.

¶ Coridon.

¶ Losse, goddes dominus, to lose (thou hast no good)
Saue hoke and cokers, thy botell and thy hood.
Thy hode all ragged, can kepe no body drye,
Many haue as good, thongh none can them espye.
He hath small reason, that hath a hode more fyne,
And wolde for malice berob the here of thyne.
As for displeasure, I warant the also,
Thou shalt for princes, great eas and pleasure do.

For

For many vpon them, doo daily craue and call,
To be in seruyce, which are not mete at all.
To be in court, thei labour so gladly,
Bycause thei knowe not, therof the misery.
Whome to receyue, it is not profitable,
And to despyse them, it is not honorable.
If thou such constraine to leaue, of their owne minde,
Thou doest to prynces, a very pleasure kynde.
And other fooles, shall take thy tale in spoyte,
And neuertheless, shall to the court resoyte.
Than let not Coyuix, plainly to saie the trouth,
Let scabbed clawe, and gyly men be wroth.
Better is for trouth, suffre paines harde,
Than for false flattryng, to haue a great rewarde.

¶ Coynix.

¶ Thou saiest but reason, I lawd the by saint Johan,
Than boldly demaunde, I praie the Coyidon.
Of suche mattiers, as to the court belong,
And I shall answer, deme if it be wrong.
That I haue learned, by practyse and seyens,
I shall as I maie, geue the intelligence.

¶ Coyidon.

¶ The court as thou saiest, is fals and dysceyuable,
Than tell me wherfore, that men most honorable.
Therin remaynyng, abydeth care and paine,
And yet by their wyll, they wyll not forth againe.

¶ Coynix.

¶ Many thynges be, which muche people blynde,
To ren to the court, with fervent hart and mynde.
But of all thynges, this specially is one,
The hope of honour, called ambycion.
Right so Mynalcas dyd, lust of honour call,
And as he compytted, Ambycion is egall.

Unto that vertue, which men call charitee,
Charitee suffreth, all harde aduersitee.
All payne and labour, and all veracion,
And euen as muche, suffreth ambicion.
For worldly wretches, in honor to excell,
Force not to labor, doune to the pyt of hell.
Lo here chefe cause, why men to Courte resorte.
But once in the Courte, when they haue had cõfort.
Suche is of mankynde, the blynde calamitee,
That in one state, if they long tyme haue bee.
Alyke, there liuyng, but vile and full of shame,
yet by no maner, can they dispyse the same.
So, who that in youth, hath vsed Courtes rage,
They fynde no maner, to leaue the same in age.
And to wyn laudes and prayse of the Commontee,
In no harde labor, thynke they difficultee.
But if men hunted for fooles, and hye glory,
As they hunt daily, for honor transitory.
Ryght few or none, would to the Courte apply,
Therto be taugeled, with care and misery.
But vnto the Courte, if thou hast thyne intent,
Bicause Prelates, and wyse men, it frequent.
Heare what the Shephearde, of Nazareth doth say,
As I hearde Faustus, declare vpon a day:
Upon the hye chayre, and seate of Moyses,
Sate the olde Scribes, and sectes of Phariseys:
Lyue, as they teache, but lyue not as they do:
And thus in the Courte, man must behaue him so.
His lyfe reformyng, lyke as suche ought to lyue,
Not by example. which they to other gyue.

Corydon.

¶ These be hye matters, and far beyonde my wyt,
If such be the Courte, what man wold mel with it.

yet

yet I assure the, before this I haue sene,
That worthi shepherdes, long in the court haue ben
¶ Cornix.
All that, I graunt the, but aske, and thou shalt synde,
That such in the court, abyde against their mynde
As the riche shepherd, which wonnid in Mortlake,
¶ Corydon.
¶ O Cornix, Cornix, keele how my hert doth quake
On him, when I thynke, my hert is full of payne,
Woulde God, that we, could get him to lyue agayne
When tyme he lyued, some blamed him ywys,
Which synce he dyed, doth him sore lacke and mys.
He passed Codrus, he passed Minalcas,
He passed Mapsus, and also Lilidas.
None other shepherd myght, with that man compare
Indurynge his lyfe, we neaded not to care,
But euer syth tyme, that he was dead and gone,
We suffre wronges, defender haue we none.
He was the Patron, of thynges past or all
His face and fauor, forget I neuer shall.
Whyle I was yonger, he came by our cotage,
Then was my father Amyntans, far in age.
But the same shepherd, gaue him both cloth & golde.
O Cornix, thy yong, be much vnlyke the olde.
¶ Cornix.
Ye as, synce his dayes, a cocke was in the fen,
I know his voyce, among a thousande men.
He taught, he preached. he mended euery wrong,
But Corydon, alas, no good thyng bydeth long,
He all was a cocke. he wakened vs from slepe,
And whyle we slombered, he dyd our foldes kepe.
No Curre, Fores, nor Butchers doggas wood,
Coude hurt our Foldes, his watchyng was so good

The hungry wolues, whyche that tyme dyd abound,
What tyme he crowed, abashed at the sounde.
This cocke was no moze, abashed of the foxe,
Than is a lyon abashed of an oxe.
Whan he went, faded the floure of all the fen,
I boldly dare swere, this cocke trode neuer hen.
This was a father, of thynges pastoral,
And that well sheweth his churche Cathedrall.
There was I lately, about the myddes of maye,
Corydon, his churche, is twenty sythe moze gaye.
Than all the churches, betwene the same and kent,
There sawe I his towmbe, and chapell excellent.
I thought fyue houres, but euen a lytell whyle.
Sayne John the virgin me thought did on me smile
Our parysshe churche, is but a dongyon,
To that gaye churche, to make comparison.
If the people were as pleasant, as the place,
Then were it paradyse, of pleasure and solace.
Than might I truly, right well fynde in my harte,
There styll to abyde, and neuer to departe.
But syns that this cocke, by death hath left his song,
Trust me Corydon, there many a thyng is wronge.
Whan I sawe his fygure, laye in the chapell syde,
Lyke death for weeping, I might no longer byde.
Lo, all good thynges, to sone awaie doeth glyde,
That no man lyketh, to long doeth rest and abyde.
Whan the good is gone, my mate this is the case,
Seldome the better reentreth in the place.

Corydon.

Thou saiest trowth Cornix, I make to god a bowe,
But aye mate Cornix, se where be we nowe.
Farre from the mattier, where as we first begen,
Begyn where we left, I praie the if thou can.

Cornix

¶ Cornix.

¶ That shall I lightly, thou saidest that a sorte,
Of good olde shepherdes, did to the court resorte.
But suche as be good, be there againe their wyll,
For truly in court, they kyndelesse good than yll.
To see muche amysse, to them it is great payne,
Whan for their wordes, none wyl his byce refrain.
Then get they but scorne, and indignacion,
And for their good myndes, paine and vexacion.

¶ Corydon.

¶ I praie the Cornix, procede, tell by and by.
Of court and courters, the payne and mysery.

¶ Cornix.

¶ That were a longe mattier, and very harde to do,

¶ Corydon.

¶ This is best remedy, take longer tyme therto.
Here is gay shadowe, here is a pleasant coole,
Take banke and flowres, for cushen and for stoole.

¶ Cornix.

¶ Than laie downe thy hoke, geue me that botell nere
With often washyng, the thyrote and voyce is clere.

¶ Corydon.

¶ Lo here the botell, drynke suche as is therin,
Drynke better, a than in the name of god, begyn.

¶ Cornix.

¶ I syr, well drawen, and that with lytell payne,
Than turne we our speche, now to the court again.
Who wyll to the court, fyrst let hym thynke before,
Whether he maie suffre labour, and paynes sore.
To the hunger and thyrst, iniury and wrong,
For these shall he fynde, the rude courters among.
And more after these, yet let hym thynke againe,
Whether in the court, he maie that thyng obtaine.

which he desireth, me thynketh the contrary,
Men wolde fynde honour, there fynde they misery.
Thus all be fooles, which willyngly there dwell,
Corydon, the court is the baptyng place of hell.

Corydon.

That is hardly saied, man, by the roode of rest:

Cornix.

I graunt it is harde, but to sate trouth, is best.
But yet shall I proue, my saiyng veritable,
Auert my wordes, see if I be culpable.
Unto our purpose, by diuers waies three,
Men maie be fooles, I shall them count to the.
Thei all be fooles, which set their thought and mynd,
That thyng for to seke, which thei shal neuer fynd.
And thei be fooles, which seke thynges with delyte,
Which if thei fynde, is harme and no profyte.
And he is a foole, a sot, and a geke also,
Which choseth a place, vnto the same to go.
And where diuers waies, leade thether directly,
He choseth the worst, and most of ieopardy.
As if diuers waies, laye vnto Islyngton,
To stowe on the wold, quaueneth or Trompyngtō.
To Doner, Dytham, to Barwyke, or Excester,
To Grauthā, Totnes, Bristowe, or Godmāchester.
To Roan, Paris, to Lyon, or Florance:

Corydon.

What hoo man, abyde, what already in France.
Lo, a fayre iourney, and shortly ended to,
With all these townes, what thyng haue we to do.

Cornix.

By god, man, knowe thou, that I haue had to do,
In all these townes, and yet in many mo.
To see the worlde, in youth me thought was best,

And

And after in age, to geue my selfe to rest.

Corydon.

Thou might haue brought one, & set by our villag

Cornix.

What man, I might not, for lacke of cariage.
To cary myne owne selfe, was all that euer I might,
And sometyme for ease, my sachell made I lyght.

Corydon.

To our fyrst mattier, we better must intende,
Els in a twelue month, we shant shal make an end.

Cornix.

True saied Corydon, that can I not denaye,
But thyne owne selfe, dyd leade me from the waie.
Unto these townes, now to returne agayne,
To any of them all, if there laye waies twaine.
The one sure and short, and leadyng dyrectly,
The other waie longer, and full of ieopardy.
That foole were worthy, a babel and a hoode,
Which wolde chose ỳ worst, perceiuyng wel ỳ good.
One of these folyes, or all, oppresse that sort,
Whiche not constrained, doeth to the court resort.
Other that thei serche, which thei maie not attaine,
Or ỳ, which gettyng, shal do them hurt and paine,
Or of two wayes, they vse to leaue the best,
For on no goodnesse, doeth their desyres rest.

Corydon.

What is the desyre, and purpose pryncipall,
Chefely frequented, among these courters all.
And for what rewarde, take they such busyesse:

Cornix.

Of that could Codrus, the trouth to expresse.
And I shall tell the, as true as the gospell,
After lyke maner, as I herde Codrus tell.

nche

Whothat remaine, by kyng or prynces lyde,
Endure great paynes, fyue thynges to prouyde.
Whothat in court, maie one of them purchase,
Thynketh to haue won, a pleasant gyft to grace.
The first is honour I tolde the of this same,
The seconde is lawde, hye name or worldly fame.
The thyrde is power, myght or aucthorite,
The fourth is riches, cheke rote of dygnitee.
The fyfte is pleasure, lust and voluptuousnesse,
For these, doo men sewe vnto the court doutlesse.
Beside these be some, but thei be sowen thyn,
Resortyng to court, their sowles for to wyn.
So much more merite, supposyng to optayne,
How much more thei byde, of displeasure and pain.
Of these all, shall be my communication.

Corydon.

Now speake on Cornix, with goddes benyson.

Cornix.

All these shall I proue, by playne experience,
Not onely wytlesse, and voyde of sapience.
But also fooles, men ignorant and wode,
And of all fooles, most worthy of a hode.
But or I begyn, I take the to wytnesse,
That no prynce, I blame delityng in goodnesse.
But onely to speake, by protestation
To saie nought, but trouth, is no detraxion.
Agaynst our souerayne, nothyng doo I reply,
In whome all vertue, doeth spryng abundantly.
And other princes, and lordes great or small,
Whyle thei fle vyces, I blame none of them all.
And though in talkyng, oft tymes call I must,
Some prynces subiecte, to folly, syn and lust.
I wolde not haue, that ascribed to them all,

I am

I am not so fonde, so dull nor rusticall.
But that I perceaue, that many princes be,
Whose lyke and vertue, is after theyr degre.
With feare of god, and dreade of paine doubtlesse,
They slake those vices, which riseth on noblesse.
And where oft vices, spryng most in hye degree,
By men of riches, welth, lust, and libertee.
Because that no man, dare blame them for offence,
yet some noble men, so gyde them by prudence.
Namely assisted, by the supernall grace,
So that wyt ruleth, and lustes haue no place.
Among gentyles, such princes fynde I can,
As Augustus, Titus, and eke Vaspasian.
Traian, Antonius, with many other mo,
And christen princes, many one also.
As riche Constantyne, and olde Archadius,
Theodocius, Charles, and Honorius.
yea, and holy Henry, lyng at Wyndesore,
Of such coude I count, mo than a twenty score.
Besyde noble Henry, which now departed late,
Spectacle of vertue, to euery hye estate.
The patrone of peace, and primate of prudence,
which on goddes church, hath done so great expẽce.
Of all these Princes, the mercy and pitee,
The loue of concorde, iustice, and equitee.
The pureneſſe of lyke, and gyftes liberall,
Note all these vertues, of the saied princes all.
And Henry the eyght, most hye and triumphant,
No gyft of vertue, nor manlineſſe doeth want.
Wyne humble speche, and language pastorall,
If it were able, shulde write his actes all.
But whyle I ought speake, of courtly misery,
Hym, with all such, except I vtterly.

But what other Princes, commenly frequent,
As true as I can, to shew, is myne intent.
But if I shoulde say, that all the misery,
Which I shall after, reherse and specify.
Where, in the Courte, of our most noble kyng,
I shoulde sayle trouth, and plainly make leasyng.
And if that I sayde, that in it were no vice:
So shoulde I lye, in right, lyke manet wyse.
As for my parte, I blame no man at all.
Saue suche, as to vice, be subiecte, bounde & thral.
For among all men, this wyse standeth the case,
That more yl, then good, doth grow, in euery place.

Corydon.

Right well excuseth, I thought not erst, trust me,
That simple Cornix, had halfe this subtelte.
But now appeareth, the very truthe certayne,
That men of worshyp, haue not best wyt and brayn.
Now tell how Courters, which gapeth for honour,
In stede of honour, kynde payne, sharpe and soure,

Cornix.

All they which suffre, in Courte, labor and payne,
Therby supposyng, true honor to optayne:
Not muche abuseth, my wordes nor doctrine:
Be muche vnable, to geue them medicyne.
For Elebor the olde, with all his salues pure,
Their wylfull folly, coulde scantly helpe and cure.
What man woulde thynke, that true honor profounde
In Princes halles, or courtes may be founde.
There none hath honor, by vertue and coynyng,
By maners, wysdome, sadnesse, nor good liuyng.
But who hath power, bye rowmes or rychesse,
He hath most honor and laude, of more and lesse.
For what poore man, a playne and simple soull,

Though

Though he were holy, as euer was sayne Poun.
Hast thou euer seue, exalted of a kyng,
For all his maners, and vertuous liuyng.
These be the wordes, of Shepherde Siluius,
Which after was byshop, and called was Pius.

Coridon.

What, yes man pardy, right many haue ben seue,
Which in poore houses, borne, & brought vp hath bē
That from low roumes, and carefull pouertee,
Be now exalted to greatest dignitee.

Cornix.

Suche is the pleasure of Princes, to promote,
Such, vnto honor, whiche scant be worth a grote.
But whom promote they, geue credence vnto me,
Suche, as in maners, to them most lykest be.
And in what maners, in beastly lechery:
In couetyse, Ire, or in byle glotony.
In hasty murther, and other crueltie,
Beleue me Coridon, I say but veritie.
A Couetous Prince, hath him most acceptable:
Which gathereth coyne, by meanes deceyuable.
As falce accusyng, and wrong extorcion:
Sellyng of iustyse, fraude and extorcion.
A lecherous Prince, hath him best in conceyt:
Which can by crafte, his place & tyme in weyt.
Virgins and wyues, most fayre and amiable:
To bring to his bed, for lust abhominable.
And a dronken Prince, hath him as dearest mate:
Which most can surfet, most reuell and drinke late.
And vnto a Prince, which loueth crueltie:
Cheifely in fauour, and conceyte is he:
Which most delyteth, in sheadyng mans blood:
Few vicious Princes, promote suche as be good.

Now is accepted, of men of hye degree,
Nor set in honor, from humble pouertee,
Excepte he hath done, some deade, so great of faine.
That all the worlde, may wonder at the same.
But this same honor, is neither true nor stable:
Which groweth of roote, so vyll and detestable,
For very honor and true, or perfect glory,
Cometh of actes, of laudable memory,
In supportacion, of right and equitie,
Or in defendyng, the Churche and Commentie,
Or other actes, commen or priuate,
Which sound to worship, these make a true estate.
But suche true honor, fewe Princes do deserue,
And no more do thei, which in the Court them serue
Syth all, almost, be of misgouernaunce,
For no good do they, excepte it be by chaunce.

Corydon.

Yet, at the least way, soche men reputed be,
Men of great honor, among the Commentee.
For whyle suche walke, in Courte or in streete,
Eche man inclyneth, which them both see or meete.
Of goth the bonet, a becke at euery worde,
Eche man must neades, geue place vnto my Lorde.
After his degree, byrth, or promocion,
Suche, of the Commens, haue salutacion.
And shortly to say, men do them more honor,
Then to the Figure, of Christ our Sauior,

Cornix,

It is as thou sayest, forsoth, my Corydon,
But harke what they say, at last, when men be gone
Then they salute them, in the deuyls name,
And pray vnto God, that they may dye with shame
And so doth many, by tourment and dolour,

When

When fykell Fortune, lyketh on them to lour.
But suche, as doth stoupe, to them before their face,
Geueth them a mocke, when they be out of place.
And one doth whysper, softe, in others ere,
And sayth: this Tyrant, is feller then a Bere.

Corydon.

Why, and feare they no more, for to say thus,

Cornix. (Silvius

No, but harke man, what sayeth the good Bishop
Lo, this same is he, which, by his bad councell,
Causeth our Prince, to be to vs to fell.
This same is he, which rayseth deme and tares,
This same is he, which streyned men on rackes.
This same is he, whiche causeth all this war,
This same is he, which all our welth doth mar.
This is, of Commens, the very deadly mall,
Which, with these charges, thus doth oppres vs al.
Who him displeaseth, he beateth all to dust,
This same is he, which kylleth whom he lust.
That all the deuyls of hell, him hence cary,
That we, no longer, endure his tyranny.
This is the honor, and all the reuerence.
Geuen vnto them, when they be from presence.
But in suche honor, who euer hath delyte,
Which is fraudefull, so faynte, and vnparfyte.
I am not a feard, to call him mad and blynde,
And a very foole, or els a sot of kynde.

Corydon.

Cornix my frende, thou speakest now to playne,
I feare, lest this geare, shall tourne vs vnto payne,
If any man be neare, be styll a whyle and harke,

Cornix.

I feare not at all, now I am set on warke.

Beside this Coridon, in court, most part doth dwel,
Flatterers, and lyers, coziers of fakell.
Juggelers, and dezers, and such a shamefull rable,
Which foz a dynner, laude men, nothyng laudable.
But men circumspecte, which be discrete and wyse,
Doeth such vaine laudes, vtterly despyse.
Foz truely no laude, is named good noz true,
Except it procede of men, which loue vertue.
A ribaudus blame, is commendacion,
Such vse to slaunder, good conuersacion.
But such thei commend, as be to them semblable,
So their dispraisyng, to the is profitable.

¶ Coridon.

¶ Now truly my harte is eased with the same,
Foz Godfrey Gozmand, lately dyd me blame.
And as foz him selfe, though he be gaie and stout,
He hath nought, but foly within and eke without.
To blowe in a bowle, and foz to pyll a platter,
To gyrne, to brawle, to counterfait, to flatter.
He hath no felowe, betwene this and croydowne,
Saue the proude plowmã, gnato of choziyngtown
Because he alway malygneth againe me,
It playne apereth, our lyfe doeth not agree.
Foz if we liued, bothe after one rate,
Than shulde I haue hym, to me a frendly mate.
But Cozmix, procede, tell forth of dignitee:

¶ Cozmix.

¶ Often in my tale, I hyndred am by the.
Such as foz honour, vnto the court reioyt,
Loke seldom tymes, vpon the lower sozt.
To the hyer sozt, foz most part thei entend,
Foz stylle their desyre, is hyer to ascend.
And whan none can make with them comparison,

Againe

Againe their prynces, conspire thei by treason.
Than whan their purpose, can not come wel to frame
Againe thei discende, and that with vtter shame.
Corydon, thou knowest right well, what I meane,
We lately of this, experience haue sene.
Whan men wolde ascende, to roumes honorable,
Euer is their mynde, and lust, insaciable.
What euer thei haue, thei count the same, but small,
While ought is greater, nought cā t hē please but al
And ones in Cambrydge, I harde a scoler saie,
One of the same, which go in gopes gaie.
That no man shulde fixe, ende of felicitee,
In worldly honour, hye roume, or dignitee.
For it is a thyng, incertaine, and vnstable,
Which man of him selfe, to puruey is not able.
In another power, this honour alwaie is,
Who most it seketh, of it doeth often mys.
And who that serueth, for honour, and hye name,
And in this worlde, to get hym noble fame.
Much paine abydeth, through cares and distresse,
And with many men, he hath much busynesse.
And oft must he rather, the mynde of men content,
Than doo the pleasure, of god omnipotent.
Than sith two honours, of diuers sortes be,
One which is geuen of men of honestee.
The seconde honour, is of a multitude,
For veraie trouth, that man of wyt, is rude.
Which hunteth in court, for the first honour,
The same to purchase, by care, and great labour.
As fortune honour, no man can there optaine,
Where neither maners, nor vertues, doeth raine.
The seconde honour, is of comontee,
Who that requireth, yet more foolishe is he.

For

For he demaundeth, a thyng right perylous,
Unsure, vnstable, and also vicious.
But bothe these sortes, alwaie be vexed sore,
Whan thei in honour, see many them before.
And often tymes, such as most vnworthy be,
For in court seldom, is lawded honestee.
Thus, who of honour, and laude is couetous,
Unto hym the court, is most contrarious.
And no where he fyndeth, greatter veracion,
Than folowyng the court, suyng ambicion.
For who wolde ascende, to honour principall,
Fyndeth in the court, most care and paine of all.

Corydon.

We haue enough had, of communicacion,
As touchyng honour, and commendacion.
Or worly praisyng, for rowmes and hye name,
And though more, might be declared of the same.
What, leaue some, my mate, for other on to hrall,
It were ouer much for vs, to talke of all.
Now talke we of might, or hye auctoritee,
How men for the same, loue in the court to be.
Spede the, for clowdes apere on euery syde,
If any storme fall, we can not longer abyde.

Cornix.

As touchyng power, might, or auctoritee,
Sometyme in the Court, in fauour great thei be.
To be with princes, of power excellent,
Some fooles, counteth a thyng preeminent.
Or that men, shulde him, a kynges tutour call,
Much to commaund, but nought to doo at all.
Bothe peace and bataile, to order at his will,
To be of power, bothe to doo good and yll.
But many a .M. which haue in such power sought,

Hath

Hath ben deceyued, and shortly come to nought.
As with one Nero, named Claudus:
In so great fauor, was one Seianus.
That whyle this Nero, was farre from his empyre,
Seianus ruled the same, at his desyre.
So muche, that Scian, had honor then in deade:
As of all the worlde, counted the seconde heade.
That if this Nero, had dyed or this houre:
This Seian truly, shoulde haue ben Emperour.
But by one letter, he after taken was:
In vtter dishonor, depo-ed from his place.
Lead for a spectacle, streyght to Tiber banke:
And there, beheaded, such was his meede & thanke.
All his ymages, in his honor erecte:
Where, with gret malyce, downe to the grould deiect
Thus, all his power ended, with care and shame:
Who that hath wisdom, wyl note & marke the same
It is no mattier, nor thyng of certaintie:
With mighty Princes, of great power to be.
No state is febler, more weake, and vncerteyne,
Then such as semeth, great with his Souereigne.
He hath enuious maliguers, and yll wyll,
All out of fauor, adiudgeth him for yll.
And all the housholde, doth commenly him hate,
Which with the maister, is seruaunt & neare mate.
And this, in the worlde, is sene most commenly,
That all hye roumes, be subiecte to enuy.
Suche, of all other, be hated and suspecte.
If they ought offende, it lyghtly is detecte.
And from all offence, if they be cleare and quyte:
Then lye they in wayte, them shortly to backebyte,
Some, for them study, fraudes, deceyte and gyle,
And talebearers walke, & greue them other whyle

And lyke as the eye, is greued with a mote:
So, Princes fauour, though it be neuer so hote:
Is lyghtly greued, and that, for small offence:
Though it were gotten, with painfull diligence.
And oft is it lost, for none offence at all,
So much with Princes, may tonges fals make fal
So muche talebearers, by crafte sorge can,
That the emperour, called Adrian:
Slew his olde frendes, and hated many one,
By these talebearers, and false detraction.
And many Princes, er this, haue done the same,
By hasty credence, distreinyng sore their name.
And as in Croydon, I heard the Collyer preache,
That holy Scripture, doth vs informe and teache:
How Saul, Dauid, and prudent Salomon,
Commaunded to be slayne, of suche, many one.
As hath ben with them, in great auctho̅itee,
And daily of suche, we may examples see.
Bicause Isaac, in myght, dyd ryse and stande,
False Abymeleche, him drone out of his lande.
And Alexander, with his owne hande slew:
Citron his frende, which he dyd after rew.
Bicause he compared, vnto this Conquerour,
His father Philippus, landes and honour.
And suche lyke chau̅ce, but lately dyd befall,
In the lande of Apuly, to the great Seneschall.
Which was so greatly, in fauor with the Queene,
That none was so great, as he himselfe dyd weene.
And thought, in fauor, to byde more stedfastly:
For he, abused the Queene, dishonestly.
But to another, the Queene tourned her loue:
And then, him murthered, his presence to remoue.
And when she had founde, the meanes him to kyll.

Then

Than had she diuers louers, at her wyll.

Corydon.

O cursed woman, and dede of crueltee:

Cornix.

Cye ye Corydon, mo be as bad as she.
Some hath by malice, their sowkyng childzen slain,
But to my mattier, wyll I retour ne againe.
Their fraude and malice, I will not now declare:
Who with them dealeth, perceaueth what is care.
But now Corydon, to pzinces to retourne:
Who pleaseth, this daie, is out againe the mozne.
Right fewe, oz none, oz by a pzinces syde,
Which doeth in fauour, continually abyde.
Whyle one ascendeth, an other doeth descende:
This is the thyng, wherto thei most entende.
And which in the court, men chefely go about,
Them selfe to bzyng in, and rubbe another out.
And than to clym vp, to offyce and renoune:
And whyle thei ascende, to thzust another doune.
Eche one desyzeth, his felowe to excel,
There is no ozder, no mozе than is in hell.
No loue, no fauour, faith, nozfidelitee:
One bzother, can not sure, foz another be.
The sonne of the father, hath no compassion:
And lyke pitee, hath the father of his sonne.
Eche man foz hym selfe, and the friend foz all:
Eche one desireth, foz to be pzincipal.
Eche one will commaunde, and haue pzeeminence:
And if any one, haue place of excellence.
He hath about hym, a thousande eyen, and nyne:
And as many tonges, to bzyng hym to ruine.
On euery syde, enuiers, hym awaite,
Deuisyng meanes, to put hym from his state.

A man of power, which many men deare,
Hath euill wyll, thus maie he many feare.
Lyke towres decaie, bylded by fiodes syde,
Which doeth the waues, continually abyde.
What shall a shepherde, doo in the court to tende,
Whose lyke and seruice, on man doeth depende.
Though thou in fauour, be with a pryuce or kyng.
yet trust not therin, it is vncertaine thyng.
Thou hast hym not bounde to the, w chaines strong,
Of leade or yron, to last and tary long.
But with feble waxe, suche bande can not last,
When loue wexeth colde, then shal the lynkes brast
The furour of wrath, shall them consume and melt,
Than is thy fauour, skant worth a shepes pelt.

Corydon.

Of some haue I herde of men of great honour,
which haue in the court, byd alwaie in fanour.
Tyll tyme their prynces departed from this lyfe,
And than with the newe, had lyke pyerogatiue.
Thus in the court nothyng so variable,
As thou reherseſt, nor yet so reprouable.

Cornix.

I graunt the Corydon, some suche haue there bene,
But that is a byrde, which seldome tyme is sene.
That is but fortune, and chaunce not on to trust,
But many be throwen, vnwarely to the dust.
Some whyle their prynces, styll liued in renowne,
But whan thei departe, all tourneth vpset downe.
Thank some haue fauour, with pryuces successours,
We see them seldom, set in so hye honours.
As with their elders, they byd before optaine,
A man sone falleth, and slow is vp againe.
So many se we, deposed from degre,

And

And how much the more, thei were in dignite.
So much more, after, be thei vyle and abiect,
Their auncient name, counted of none effect.
Than thei perceaue, who was their frende and fo,
Before in honour, forfothe thei coude not fo.
To men in power, come often ftoupe and becke,
Which gladly wold fee, their hedes frō their necke
When thei by fortune, are on the grounde againe.
Than laugh their foes, and haue at them diſdaine.
Their frendes dolour and forow, is not fmall.
Their owne diſhourſhyp, a fhame is worſt of all.
For after thei line ſtyll, in dolour and diſtreſſe,
In fhame, rebukes, in care, and heuineſſe.
This is the comon ende, and ſure concluſyon,
Of ſuch as with prynces, ſerue for promocion.
Wherfore I dare call them fooles, before the,
Which ſerue in the court, for might or dignitee.

Corydon.

For fothe mate Cornix, I can not well deny,
But that ſuch chaūces, doeth happen commonly.
Than better is fmall fyre, one eaſely to warme,
Than is a great fyre, to doo one hurt or harme.
I am aſſured, as for thy ſelfe and me:
We nede not to feare, to fall from our degre.
Beggery is loweſt, who that can fare with all:
Nedeth not to feare, to lower ſtate to fall.
But haue done Cornix, and tell the wretchedneſſe:
Of ſuch as in court, ſerue onely for richeſſe.
As for the other, the beſt, that we do maie:
Is to differre it, but yll another daie.

Cornix.

Well ſaied Corydon, I am content with that,
But fyrſt let me dryncke, I ſhall the better chat.

This whey is sowre, but vse easeth the paine:
Drynke Corydon, and stoppe it vp againe.

Corydon.

Cowsaie on Cornix, thy talkyng liketh me,
I see that councell, excludeth capacitee.
Saue for thy wisedom, or this tyme as I wene,
With courtly misery, I tangled shulde haue bene.
But well fare councell, whan it is true and good,
I wolde that Minalcas, this also vnderstode.

Cornix.

Many of the court resort, daily doubtlesse,
In youthe to gather, some treasure or richesse.
Than against age, thei maie go out againe,
And afterwarde lyue, without labour or paine.
In hope of this ease, and latter libertee,
Many in the court, byde long captiuitee.
And if some courter, thus to hym selfe doeth saie,
Alas, shal I neuer, ought for my selfe purney.
Whan shall I in court, some litell banke procure,
That from the bagge & staffe, my age maie be sure.
The foole thinketh, than most richesse for to haue,
Against such season, whan nerest is his graue.
Whan nere is ended, his iourney of this lyfe,
Than is he for vitayle, most bely and penlyke.
Our sauiour saieth, it is as harde doubtlesse:
To one, which fixeth his pleasure on richesse.
To enter that royalme, which is aboue the skye,
As an alle to enter, thorough a nedels eye.
I hard our vicar saie, in lyke maner wyse,
Ones whan he preached, against couetise.
Than it is foly, great richesse to purchase,
And by it to lose, the hope of heauenly place.
Is not Chryste able, his poore men to sustaine,

yes and

Yeas, and to ryd them, out of all other payne.
The poore Apostles, be greater now of fame,
Then ryche Crœsus, for all his royall name.
When man hath in God, his trust and confidence:
In all tyme of neade, he kayleth no expence.
All good men fixeth, their trust in God pardye,
He knoweth better, what thyng we neade, then we
Of some poore freers, is made more curiously:
Then is some Abbey, or ryche Monastery,
The fyrst hath their trust, in God our Creatour,
The other trusteth, vpon their vayne treasour.
Thus God oft helpeth them, that in him haue trust,
When worldly ryches, men leaueth in the dust.

Corydon.

¶ Cornix, thy promyse, was not for to preache,
But me, of the Courters misery, to teache.
Agaynst thyne owne selfe, thou speakest now pardye,
For fyrst thou grutched, agaynst pouertie.
Agayne, thou blamest, plenty of rychesse now,
But few men liuyng, thy saiyng wyll a low.
For without rychesse, thou sayest openly,
Vertue nor connyng, now be nothyng set by.

Cornix.

¶ I wyll not deny, but it is neade doubtlesse,
For all men liuyng, for to haue some rychesse.
But trust me Corydon, there is diuersitie,
Betwene, to haue rychesse, and rychesse to haue the.
Then thou hast rychesse, when thou dispysest store:
Bestow it wele, and forsest not therfore.
But rychesse hath the, when wretched couetyce.
Thy mynde subdueth, to euery yll and vyce
And when thy desyre, is yet insaciable,
Though thou haue treasure, almost innumerable.

Suche

Suche maner ryches, the collyer tell the can.
Is vile and odible, both vnto God and man.
But now to the Courte, for to retourne agayne:
Some thynke, by Princes, great ryches to optayne
But whyle they coueyt, inryched for to be:
Coridon for soth, they leese their lybertie.
And yet if I shoulde, the very trouth expresse:
No man can, in the Court, fynde iust a true richesse
If thy Lorde geue the, either golde or fee,
Unto his seruyce, more arte thou bounde pardye.
Saynt Gregory sayth, affirmyng the same thyng,
In greatest gyftes, is greatest rekenyng.
But if thou wylte then, furth of the Courte departe,
When by thy Prince, inryched thus thou arte.
Then shall be found some gilte, some fraude or trayne
By meane wherof, thou leesest all agayne.
A faute shal be founde, some one shall the accuse,
Of thynges wherof, thou dyd neuer thynke ne muse.
Though thou be gyltlesse, yet shall thou be conuicte,
Farewell thy good, all shalbe from the lyfte.
Or some backe rekenyng, concernyng thy office:
Of all thy rychesse, shall pyll the with a tryce.
Then art thou clapped, in the Fleete or Clynke.
Thē nought must thou say, whatsoeuer thou thynke
For if thou beaynne, to murmure or complayne,
Thy lyfe thou loseſt, thē hast thou harmes tawayne

Coridon.

Yet were it better, for to continew styll,
As long in the Courte, as is the Princes wyll.

Cornix.

If thou continew, thou must be diligent:
And ready at hande, at euery commaundement.
When he commaundeth, thou must be prest to fyght,

To

To ryde and to go, by day, and eke by nyght,
No drede, no daunger, may helpe the, nor excuse,
No payne, nor peryll, mayst thou flee nor refuse.
Sometyme must thou be, in ayer contagious:
And in thousandes other, of chaunces perylous.
What he commaundeth, that neades do thou must:
Be it good or yll, righteous or vniust.
Laugh when he laugheth, all if thyne herte be sad:
Wepe when he wepeth, be thou neuer so glad.
Laude what he laudeth, though it be not laudable:
Blame what he blameth, though it be cõmendable.
And shortly to speake, thou must all thyng fulfyll:
As is his pleasure, and nothyng at thy wyll.
None of thy wyttes, are at thy libertee:
Unto thy maister, they neades must agree.
What is more foolysh, more fonde or imprudent:
Then to get rychesse, by suche extreme tourment.
For nought it is els, but playne a frenesy,
To byde for rychesse, this care and misery.
It woulde make one claw, where as it doth not itche,
To see one lyue poore, bicause he woulde dye ryche.
Bicause one in Court, hath gotten good or twayne:
Should all men suppose, the same there to optayne
And in hope therof, to lose their lybertee:
But seking rychesse, suche fyndeth pouertee:
For many in Court, whyle they abyde richesse:
Spende all their treasure, & lyue in wretchednesse.
What sayeth some foole, spende on a bone voyage:
Perchaunce my wages, shall passe myne heritage.
But whyle he spendeth, tyll scant remayne a grote:
Home he retourneth, yea with a thrydbare cote,
His horse is so fat, that playne he is not able:
To get his body, nor head out of the stable.

His swoꝛde and buckeler, is pledged at the beare,
And to go lyghter, so is his other geare.
The ryder walketh, now with his bow and arrowes,
With a fayre excuse, in hedges, to kyll sparrowes.
And oft retournyng, he sayde but all to late:
Adieu all Courtyng, in the deuyls date.

Cozidon.

CAlyz, this palleth, now by the Roode of Some:
Better were foꝛ suche, foꝛ to had byd at home.
But tell me Cozmix, hath all men the bondage,
And payne of the Courte, foꝛ no moze aduauntage.

Cozmix.

CYeas, sometyme ryches, is geuen by some chaunce:
To suche, as of good, haue greatest abundaunce.
Lykewyse as streames, vnto the see doth glyde:
But on bare hylles, no water wyll abyde.
So, if a pooze man, serue in the Court long whyle:
Foztune shall neuer, so frendly on him smyle.
But that a ryche man, in roume oz hye dignitie:
Foz a lytell seruyce, hath moze rewarde then he.
As foz the seruyce, none in the Courte shall pounder:
They note the person, styl is the pooze kepte vnder
Foz a lytell man, meete is a small hackney:
So, smallest persones, hath small rewarde away.
But men of woꝛshyp, set in aucthoꝛitee,
Must haue rewardes, great, after their degree.
And Cozidon, Pzinces geue nought, I tell the playne
But when that they lust, to reuoke agayne.
And so, such thynges, which Pzinces to the geue:
To the be as sure, as water in a syue.
Thou maist not, of them, make alienacion:
Noz the same cary, vntyll another nacion.
Thou maist not dispose them, after thyne intent,

But

But lyke as thy prynce, is pleased and content.
Than such vaine rychesse, can be thyne by no skyll,
Syth thou haste no myght, to spende thē at thy wil
ye and moze ouer, thou hast no facultee,
The same to bequethe, at wyl, whan thou must dye.
Jf thou want yssue, no man shall be thyne heire,
Saue onely the prince, thus doeth the woꝛld fare.
Jf thou haue yssue, succede shall they not the,
Except with thy prince, they wyll in scrupte be.
How many hath be slayne, me nedeth not expresse,
Of such as them erst, auaunced to rychesse.
So prynces are wont, with rychesse come to fede,
As we doo our swyne, whan we of larde haue nede.
We fede our hogges, them after to deuour,
Whan thei be fatted, by costes and labour.
Jn lyke wyse prynces, promoteth many one,
And whan thei be riche, thei gnaw them to the bone
Lyke as Longinus, and Seneca doubtlesse,
Which as saieth codꝛus, were slain foꝛ their rytches
So writeth Pius, whome some Eneas call,
Jclawie allegyng, of famous Juuenall.

Coꝛidon.

The moze of the court, that thou doest count & tell,
The lesse meliketh, with it to deale oꝛ mell.

Coꝛnix.

What byde Coꝛidon, yet hast thou not herde all.
The court is in perth, an ymage infernall.
Without fayze painted, within owgly and byle,
This know thei surely, which there hath bē a while
But of our purpose, now foꝛ to speake againe,
Fewe prynces gyue that, which to thē selfe attaine.
Trust me Coꝛidon, J tell the by my sowle,
They robbe saint Peter, therw̄ to clothe sait powle.

And lyke as daily, we bothe maie see and here,
Some pyll the churche, therwith to led the quere.
Whyle men promoted, by such rapine are glad,
The wreches pylled, mourne, and be wo and sad.
And many heires, lyue giltlesse in distresse,
Whyle vnworthy, hath honour and richesse.
But such vyle gyftes, maie not be true plainly,
Nor yet possessed, by lawe rightwisly.
And sith fewe roumes, of lordly dignitee,
Be wonne, or holden, with right and equitee.
Saie what thyng haue thei, to geue by lawe & right,
Sith their chefe tresure, is won by wrōgful might
Whence come their iewels, their coine & cloth of price
Saue most by rapine, and sellyng of iustice.
Els of saint Peters, or Christes patrimony,
Now fewe be founders, but confounders be many.
These be no gyftes, true, honest, nor laudable:
Neither to the geuer, nor taker profitable.
These men call giftes, of none vtilitee,
Which thus procedeth, of fals iniquitee.
Than leaue we this vice, whyle all good men it hate,
For couetous, with coyne, be neuer saciate.
I harde syr Sampson saie, but this other daie,
That Jerom, & Seneke, doeth both this sētēce say:
That couetous wretches, not onely want that thyng,
Which thei neuer had, in tytle nor keppng.
But that which thei haue also, thei want and faile,
Syth thei it hauyng, of it haue none auaile.
And as I remembre, olde Codrus saied also,
That gold nought helpeth, whan we must hence go
Skant haue we pleasure of it, while we here tary,
And none can his store, nor glory with hym cary.
Thus ought we to lyue, as hauyng all in store,

But

But nought possessyng, or caryng nought therfore.
hat shuld chrysten men, seke farther for richesse,
Hauyng fode and clothe, it is enough doubtlesse.
And these maie our lorde, geue vnto vs truly,
Without princes seruice, or courtly misery.
Thus fynde we in court, playne no richesse at all,
Or elles fynde we such, with care continuall.
That it were better, no richesse to haue founde,
Than for false treasure, in thraldom to be bounde.

Corydon.

¶ Loke vp mate Cornix, beholde in to the west,
These wyndy cloudes, vs threteneth some tempest.
My clothes be thyn, my shepe be shorne newe,
Such storme might fall, ẏ bothe might after rewe.
Dryue we our flockes, vnto our poore cotage,
To morow of court, we maie haue more language.
This daie hast thou tolde, and proued openly,
That all such courters, doeth lyue in mysery.
Which serue in the court, for honour, laude, or fame,
And myght or power, thou proued hast this same.
And that all thei lyue, depest in distresse,
Which serue ther, to wyn vaine treasure or riches.
As for the other two, and yt ought more remaine,
Thou maiest tell to morow, when we tourne again.

Cornix.

¶ I graunt Corydon, take vp thy bottell sone,
Lesse is the burthen, now that the drynke is done.
Lo here is a sporte, our bottell is contrary,
To a cowes vdder, and I shall tell the why.
With a full vdder, retourneth home the cowe,
So doeth not the bottell, as it appereth nowe.
Corydon, we must haste, in our iourney make,
Or els shal the storme, vs and our shepe ouertake.

¶ Thus endeth the first egloge.

Here begynneth the seconde egloge, of the miseryes of courters.

Corydon.

HOwkell this Cornix, why taried thou so long,
This is y. iiii. daie, some thig is w the wrong.
Els some perturbance, of houshold busynesse,
Unto thy pasture hath made the tende the lesse.

Cornix.

COdrus, the richest shepherde of our coste,
Which of his wethers, is wont hym selfe to boste.
Unto a banket, frendly inuited me,
The same daie, after I dyd departe fro the.
Whyle I hym helped, his gestes for to chere,
That hath me caused, so lately to be here.

Corydon.

CWho fatly fareth, with costly meate and drynke,
For warke behofull, doeth litrell care or thynke.
Whan full is the wombe, the bones wolde haue rest,
Fye on such surfait, faire temperaunce is best.
My wyues graie hen, one egge laied euery daie,
My wife fed hyr well, to cause hyr two to laye.
But whan she was fatte, than layed she none at all,
I trowe that lyke chaunce, be vnto the befall.
For now of thy flocke, thou hast no mynde nor care,
Sith tyme thy wittes, were dulled with fat fare.

Cornix.

CNot so Corydon, for whan I louye at home,
I oft go to bed, with kaynt and hungry wombe
Than lye I clombryng, to wyn in sleape I thynke,
That same which I lost, for lacke of meate a drink
But whan I am fedde, than slepe I stedfastly,
And after short rest, than worke I lustely.

Corydon.

Corydon.

☞ A byrde well ingorged, kepes well her nest,
A full belly asketh, a bed full of rest.

Corvix.

☞ That is, when diet, exceedeth temperaunce,
Then foloweth slouth, and all misgouernaunce.
As brauyng, dablyng, discorde, and lechery,
Blasphemyng, lyyng, crakyng, and periury.
But as touchyng me, because I want at home,
When I am a brode, I furnysh wele my wombe.
Yet more I take not, then nature may sustayne,
And then, sore worke I, it to disgest agayne.
So dyd I with Codrus, tyll I am fatigate.

Corydon.

¶ I wist well, somethyng, made the to come so late
We lyst no longer, to commune of excesse,
But tell me Corvix, what was thy busynesse.

Corvix.

☞ The ryuer began, the bankes to ouer flow:
At dyuers partes, where as the grounde was low.
For myght of water, wyll not our leyser byde,
We kayn were, our shepe, for the tyme to set a syde.
And both day and nyght, to put to our diligence,
For to ouercome, the floudes violence.
Strengthyng our bankes. & heightbyng them agayn
Which were abated, with floudes of great rayne,

Corydon.

☞ The earth, in this poynt, is lyke maners of men,
From hye ground, water, descendeth to the fen.
The hye mountaynes, of water, them discharge,
And lade the ryuers, with floudes great and large.
Agayne, the ryuers, discharge th them lykewyse,
And chargeth the sea: so mennes commen gyse,

Is alway

Is alway to lay, the burthen of the sacke,
Which them sore greueth, vpon some other backe.

Corydon.

Nothyng is truer, then is this of thee sayde:
It is a true prouerbe, and prety conuayde.

Corydon.

But now thou arte come, I pray the hertely,
Begynne where thou lefte, of Courters misery.
The heauen is cleare, the cloudes cleane away:
Which is a token, of caulme and pleasaunt day,
The poynted byrdes, with pleasunt tune syng,
The dewy flowers, freshly doth smyle and spring.
All thyng reioyseth. eche thyng doth nature kepe,
Then were it great shame, to vs to snorte & slepe.
By mery talkyng, long season semeth shorte:
In frendly speache, is solace and confort.

Cornix.

As I remembre, we spake last of ryches,
Now talke we of lust, or voluptuousnesse.
Forsoth, some wretches, of maners vyle and rude.
Haue counted in lust, most hye beatitude.
And namely the secte, which folow epicure:
Which shamefull secte, doth to this day indure.
Whom the Philosophers, and clarkes now a dayes,
Dispyse with wordes, yet folow they his wayes.
For what is that clarke, or prelate in honour,
Which cleane dispyseth, all temporall pleasour.
And therfore perchaunce, if auy suche there be,
Dispising to looke, on fayrnesse or beautie.
Dispising odoues, or sapour dilicate,
And pleasaunt touchyng, dispising in lyke rate.
Some call them happy, which can such thyng exclude
But no men count them, of maners dull and rude.

For

For two dyuers wayes, doth mannes lyfe contayne.
The one of vertue, of diligence and payne:
The other of lust, of pleasure, myrth and rest.
The fyrst displesyng, men count the second best.
The way of vertue, is rough and desolate,
With wede and thornes shyt, for all men it hate.
Few it frequenteth, or folow in regarde,
For the fyrst entrye, to them appeareth harde.
The way of pleasure, is playne and eudent,
And greatly worne, for many it frequent:
The harde way of vertue, at ende hath quyetnesse,
The plaine way of pleasure, hath daũger & distresse
Yet where one haunteth, the passage of vertue,
For that one .iiii. score, their lustes doth insue.

Cordon.

¶ These mattiers be hye, and semeth diffuse,
Draw to our purpose, cause me no longer muse.

Cornix.

¶ Though I be poore, and here nothyng set by,
Yet haue I of this, sene some philosophye.
But the lacke of vse, hurteth all science.
And wretched thraldome, is enuy to prudence.
What tyme the persone, is counted as abiecte,
Then langour maketh, the wyt of small effecte.
A famous doctor, is blynded among fooles,
Onely his valour, is clearely in the scooles.
A precious stone, well couched in your golde,
Is bright and comely, and goodly to beholde.
Throw it in the myre, then is the beautye gone,
And hyd for the tyme, both of the golde and stone.
For lacke of vsyng, a sworde earst glased bright,
With rust is eaten, made foule, and blacke to syght.
Right so my reason, sometyme fresh to deuise,

Is now

Is now made rusty, for lacke of exercyse.

Corydon.

By this disputyng, thou maist scoure away the rust
Retourne now to speake, of pleasure and of lust.

Cornix.

Many blynde wretches, byde in the Court labour
There wenyng to wyn, their lustes and pleasure.
But it is a wonder, and mattier cheike of all,
To speake of their foly, and appetite rurall.
But fyrst let vs talke, what pleasure is there sene,
Which the fyue wyttes, begynnyng at the eyen,

Corydon.

That is trouth Cornix, right many thynges be,
Which men haue pleasure, and great delyte to see.
And these in the courte, be most habundance,

Cornix.

Nay, there hath the syght, no maner of plesance.
And that shall I proue, long tyme ear it be nyght,
Some men delyteth, beholdyng men to fyght.
Or goodly Knyghtes, in pleasaunt apparayle,
Or sturdye souldyers, in bryght harnesse or mayle.
Or an armye ready, arayed to the warre,
Or to see them fyght, for that he stand a farre.
Some glad is to see, these Ladyes beautious,
Goodly appoynted, in clothyng sumptuous.
A nombre of people, appoynted in lyke wyse,
In costly clothyng, after the newest guyse.
Spoztes, disguysyng, fayre courlers mount & praunce
Or goodly Ladyes, & Knyghtes syng and daunce.
To see fayre houses, and curious picture,
Or pleasaunt hangyng, or sumptuous vesture.
Of sylke, of purpure, or golde most orient,
And other clothyng, dyuers and excellent.

Hye

Hye curious byldyng, and palaces roiall,
Or chapels, temples, faire and substanciall.
Images grauen, or baultes curious,
Gardeins and medowes, or place delicious.
Forestes, parkes, well furnished with dere,
Colde pleasant streames, or welles faire and clere
Curious conduites, or shadowed mountaines,
Swete pleasant valleys, laundes, other plains.
Houndes, and such other thynges, manifolde:
Some men take pleasure, and solace to beholde.
But all these pleasures, be much more iocunde,
To priuate persones, which not to court be bound.
Than to such other, which of necessitee,
Are bounde to the court, as in captiuitee.
For they which be bounde to princes, without faile,
When thei must nedes, be present in batayle.
There shall they not be at large, to see the sight,
But as souldiours, in the middes of the sight.
To runne here and there, sometyme his foe to smite,
And oftymes wounded, herein is small delite.
And more must he thynke, his body to defende,
Than for any pleasure, about hym to intende.
And oft is he faint, and beaten to the grounde,
I trow in such sight, smal pleasure maie be founde.
As for faire ladyes, clothed in sylke and golde,
In court at thy pleasure, thou canst not beholde.
At thy princes pleasure, thou shalt them onely see,
Than such shalt thou see, which littell set by the.
Whose shape and beautee, maie soinkl ambe thy hart,
That thought & langour, mai cause the for to smart
For a small sparcle, maie kendle one certaine,
But scantly Seuerne, maie quenche it clene againe
And beautee blyndeth, and causeth man to set,

His harte on that thyng, which he shall neuer get.
To see men clothed, in silkes pleasantly,
It is small pleasure, and oft causeth enuy.
Whyle thy leane Jade, halteth by thy syde,
To see another, vpon a courser ryde.
Though he be neither gentylman, nor knyght;
Nothyng is thy fortune, thy harte can not be light.
As touchyng sportes, and games of pleasaunce,
To syng, to reuell, and other daliaunce.
Who that will truly, vpon his lorde attende,
Unto such pleasures, he seldom maie entende.
Palaces, pictures, and temples sumptuous,
And other byldyng, both gay and curious.
These maie marchauntes, more at their pleasure see.
Than such as in court, be bounde alwaie to be.
Syth kynges, for most part, passe not their regyons,
Thou seest now Cities, of foreyn nacions.
Such outwarde pleasures, maie the people see,
So maie not courters, for lacke of lybertee.
As for these pleasures, of thynges variade,
Which in the feldes apereth delectable.
But seldom season, maiest thou obtaine respite,
The same to beholde, with pleasure and delyte.
Sometyme the courter, remaineth halfe the yere,
Close within hys walles, much lyke a prysoner.
To make eskapes, some seldome tyme are wont,
Saue whē their princes, hath pleasure for to hunt
Or els otherwise, them selfe to recreate,
And than this pleasure, shal thei not loue, but hate.
For than shall thei forth, most namely to thy paine,
Whan thei in myndes, wolde at home remaine.
Other in the frost, hayle or els snowe,
Or whan sum tempest, or mighty wynd doeth blow
Or

Or els in great heate, and feruour excessyke,
But close in houses, the most parte wast their lyke.
Of colour faded, and cloked nere with dust,
This is of courters, the ioy, and all the lust.

Corydon.

What yet maie thei syng, & with faire ladyes dasce
Bothe common and laugh, herein is some pleasáce.

Cornix.

Nay nay Corydon, that pleasure is but smal,
Some ar not content: what mā wyll pleasure call.
For some in the daunce, hyr pyncheth by the hande,
Which gladly wolde see hym stretched in a bande.
Some galand seketh, hir fauour to purchase,
Which playne abhorreth, for to beholde his face.
And styll in dauncyng, most parte inclineth she,
To one much vyler, and more abiect than he.
No daie ouerpasseth, but that in court, men fynde,
A thousand thinges, to vex and greue their myndé.
Alwaie thy foes, are present in thy syght,
And often so great is their degree and might.
That nedes must thou kys ỳ hand, which did ỳ harme
Though thou wolde se it, cut gladly from the arme.
And briefely to speake, if thou to court resort,
If thou see one thyng, of pleasure or comfort.
Thou shalt see many, before or thou departe,
To thy displeasure, and penysyfulnesse of hert.
So kyndeth thy sight there, more of bytternesse,
And of displeasure, then pleasure and gladnesse.

Corydon.

As touchyng the sight, now se I clere and plaine,
That men in the court, shall fynde but care & pain.
But yet me thynketh, as daily doeth apere,
That men in the court, maie pleasant thinges here

And by such meanes, haue delectacion,
Whyle thei here tidynges, and communicacion.
And all the chaunces, and euery newefitee,
As well of our coste, as farre beyond the sea.
There men maie here some, that comen of wisedome,
For of men wisest, within the court be some.
There be recounted, and of men learned tolde,
Famous chronicles, of actes great and olde.
The worthy dedes, of princes excellent,
To moue yonge princes, such artes to frequent.
For whan wyse men dare not, bad princes blame,
For their misliuyng, Menalcas saieth this same.
Of other princes, then laude thei the vertue,
To stire their lordes, such liuyng to ensue.
And whyle they commende princes, vnworthely,
To be commendable, thei warne them secretly.
All this maie courters, in court oft tymes here,
And also songes oft tymes, swete and clere.
The byrde of Cornewayle, the Crane, and the kyte,
And mo other lyke, to here it is delyte.
Warblyng of their tunes, at pleasure and at wyll,
Though some be busy, which haue but litteli skyll.
There men maie here, much other melody,
In sound resemblyng, an heauenly harmony.
Is this not pleasure, me thinke no mirthe is skant,
Where no retoilyng, of mynstrelsy doeth want.
The baggepype or rydell, to vs is delectable:
Then is their solace, more greatly commendable.

Cornix.

Thou art deceaued, and so be many mo,
Which for such pleasure, vnto the court will go.
But for these also, I must fynde remedy,
Which sue to the court, for lust of melody.

They

They be mad kooles, which to reioyce their eares:
Wyll lyue in court, moze dzedeful then with beares
In steade of pleasure, suche fynde but heuynesse,
They heare small good, but muche vnhappynesse.
As touchyng tidynges, which thou durst first abiecte,
There muche thynges is tolde, false & of none effect
And moze displeasure, shall wysemen in them fynde,
Then ioye oz pleasure, to conkozt of their mynde.
These be tidynges, in court, most commenly,
Oz Cities taken, warre, fraude, oz tyzanny.
Good men subdued, oz els by malyce slayne,
And bad in their stede, haue victozy and raygne.
Of spoilyng, murder, oppzession and rappne,
How law and iustyce, soze falleth to ruyne.
Among the courters, suche newelties be tolde,
And in meane season, they laugh, both yong & olde.
Whyle one recounted, some dede abhominable,
Such other wzetches, repute it commendable.
But men of wysdome, well learned in Scripture,
Which talke of maners, oz secrete of nature.
Oz of histozies, their disputacion,
Is sweetely sauced, with adulacion.
They cloke the trouthe, their Pzinces to content,
To purchase fauour, and mynde beninolent.
In cometyme, Poetes, oz Dzatours ozuate,
Make ozisons, befoze some great estate.
It is not so sweete, to heare them talkyng there,
Where as their myndes, be troubled oft with feare.
As in the scooles, where they at lybertie,
Without all flatterynge, may talke playne veritie.
Foz truly, in Court, all communicacion,
Must nedes haue spice, of adulacion.
Suche as be gylty, a non be mad and wzoth,

If

If one be so bolde, plainly to say the trouth.
Therfore yll lyuers, ofte tymes lauded be,
And men dispraysed, which loue honestye.
And true histories, of actes auncient,
Be falsely tourned, some Princes to content.
And namely, when suche histories testifye,
Blame, or dishonestly, touchyng his progeny.
Then new histories, be feyned of the olde.
With flatery paynted, with lyes manyfolde,
Then some good scoler, without promocion,
Hearyng suche glosed, communicacion:
Dare not be so bolde, suche lyers to gainsay,
But laugh in his mynde, yet at the foole he may.
And also in Court, Auctors not veritable,
And least of valour, are counted most laudable.
But Liuius, Salust, and Quintus Curcius.
Justinian, Plutarke, and Suetonius:
With suche noble Auctors, and many other mo,
In this tyme Courters, wyll nothyng to do.

Cordon.

Cornix, wher hast thou these straunge names sought

Cornix.

I sought not in youth, the world all for nought,
Mynstrelles. and syngers, be in the court lykewyse,
And that of the best, and of the frenche guyse.
Such men with Princes, be seene more acceptable,
Then men of wysdome, and clarkes venerable.
For Philosophers, Poetes and Oratours,
Be seldome in court, had in so great honours.
When thou fayne wold heare, such folke play or syng,
Nothyng shalbe done, of them, at thy lykyng.
But when it pleaseth, the Princes them to call,
Their sounde ascendeth, to chaumbre and to hall.

When

when thou woldest sleape, or doo some busines,
Then is their musycke, to the vnquietnesse.
Yet byde their clamor and sounde, thou neades must,
To thy great trouble, and no pleasure or lust.
This is of syngers, the very propertye:
Alway they coueyt, desyred for to bee.
And when their frendes, wold heare of their connyng
Then are they neuer, disposed for to syng.
But if they begynne, desyred of no man,
Then shew they all, and more then they can.
And neuer leaue they, tyll men of them be wery,
So in their conceyt, their connyng they set by.
And thus, when a man, would gladlyest them heare,
Then haue they disdayne, in presence to appeare.
And then, when a man, would take his ease and rest,
Then none can boyde them, they be in place so prest
Yet needest must thou, eschew season principall,
Reward suche people, els art thou nought at all.
For their displeasure, to the and paynes harde,
Lo, such is the court, thou must geue them reward
Besyde this, in court, men heare scant other thyng:
Saue chidyng, braulyng, bannyng and cursyng.
Eche one is busye, his felow for to blame:
There is blasphemyng, of Goddes holy name.
Deuilyng othes, with pleasure for the nones.
And often they speake, together all at ones.
So many clamors, vse they, at euery tyde,
That scant mayst thou heare, thy felow by thy syde
They boast their synne, as past the feare of shame:
Detractyng other men, fautye in the same.
One laudeth his lande, where he was bread & borne:
At others contrary, hauyng disdayn & scorne.
On eche syde soundeth, foule speache of ribaudry:

Vaunctyng and boastyng, of tynne and vilany.
No measure, maner, nor shame, nor reuerence:
Haue they in wordes, in secrete or presence,
A rusty ribaude, more vilet then a sow:
Hath in the courte, more audience then thou.
Some sweare, some brall, some sclaunder & backbyte
To heare such maners, can be but small delyte:
Except a wretche, wyll conforme him to that sorte:
Then in suche hearing, his blyndnesse hath comfort.
These scabbed scolyons, may do and say their wyll:
When men of worshyp, for very shame are styll.
Who that hath wysdome, wolde rather deasse to bee,
Then daily to heare, suche vile enormitee.

Corydon.

I see in hearyng, men in the court haue no ioye:
Yet is it pleasure, to handle, and to toy.
With Galatea, Licoris or Phillis:
Neera, Malkyn, or lusty Testilis.
And other dames, if coyne be in the pouche:
Men may haue pleasure, them for to fele & touche,
In courte; hath Venus, her power principall:
For women, vseth to lone them most of all.
Which boldly boasteth, or that can tyng or get:
Which are well decked, with large bushes set.
Which hath the maistery, ofte tyme in tournament:
Or that can gambaude, or daunce feate and gent.
Or that can alway, be mery without care:
With suche can women, most cheifly deale and fare.
So may these Courters, in court, some pleasure wyn
Onely in touchyng, and felyng their soft skyn.

Cornix.

Thou arte abused, for sothe it is not so:
Louers in Court, haue most of care and wo.

Some

Some women loue them, inflamed by vyle lust,
But yet veraie fewe, dare them beleue or trust.
For wel knowe women, that courters chat and bable
They boste their synnes, and euer be vnstable.
After their pleasure, than to the olde adiewe,
Than be thei busy, to puruey for a newe.
This knowe all women, some by experience,
So fewe to courters, geue trust or confidence.
Except it be such, as forseth not hyr name,
Or passed all feare, rebuke, or worldly shame.
Than such a brothell, her kepeth not to one,
For many courters, ensueth hyr alone.
And none shalt thou loue, of this vyle sort pardie,
But that she loueth another, more than the.
And than as often, as partyng felowes mete,
They chyde and braule, though it be in the strete.
Hatered and stryfe, and fyghtyng cometh after,
Effusion of bloode, and oftentyme manslaughter.
Thou canst no woman, kepe streyt and nygardly,
To whome many one, doeth promesse largely,
Another shall come, more fresshe and gaily decte,
Than hath he fauour, and thou art cleane abiecte.
When thou haste wasted thy money, name and fede,
Than shalt thou haue nought, saue a mocke for thy mede.
Thou art the nynthe, wenyng to be alone,
For none of this sorte, can be content with one.
yet shall she faine hyr chast, as Penolope,
Though she loue twenty, as well as she doeth the.
And eche for his tyme, shall haue a mery loke,
She sigheth, as she great sorowe for them toke.
With fained teares, she moisteth oft thy lappe,
Tyll tyme that thy purse, be taken in a trappe.
And if she perceaue that all thy coyne is gone,

Than daunce at the doore, adieu gentill John.
And oft whan thou goest, to visite thy lemman,
Wyth hyr shalt thou fynde, some other Joly man.
Than shall she make the, for to beleue none other,
But he is her father, her vncle, or her brother.
But plainly to speake, he brother is to the,
If kynred maie ryse, of such iniquitee.
Againe to hyr house, if that thou after come,
Than shalt thou fynde, that she is not at home.
But gone to some other, which for rebuke and shame,
Durst not come to hyr, for hurtyng of his name.

Coridon.

¶ Here is a rule, this doeth excede my mynde,
Who wolde thynke this gyle, to be in womankynd.
But yet man pardie, some be as good within,
As thei be outwarde, in beautee of their skyn.
Of this cursed sorte, thei can not be eche one,
Some be which kepe them, to one louer alone.
As Penolope, was to hyr Ulixes,
Thinke on what Codrus, recounted of Lucresse.
Though she not willyng, was falsly violate,
With hyr owne handes, procured she hyr fate.

Cornix.

¶ It were a great wonder, among the women all,
If none were partlesse, of lust venerall.
I graunt some chast, what tyme thei can not chuse,
As whan all men, their company refuse.
Or whan she knoweth, her vyce shulde be detect,
Than of misliuyng, auoideth she the sect.
And though in ẏ world, some womē maiest thou fynd,
Which chastely lyue, of their owne propre kynde.
Or that can kepe hyr selfe onely to one,
It is with suche, of pleasure small or none.

To

To hyr at pleasure, thou canst not resorte,
In pleasure stollen, but small is the confort.
either maiest thou long, with such one remaine,
And in shorte pleasure, departyng in great paine.
To hyr maiest thou come, but onely now and than,
By stelth and stertes, as pryuey as thou can.
To loue and thy lord, maiest thou not serue togyther,
If so thy wyt is distract, thou wot not whither.
Thy lorde doeth chalenge, to hym thy hole seruice,
And the same doeth loue, chalenge in like wise.
Not onely it is harde, in the court to saue,
Thy lemman chast, with hyr pleasure to haue.
But also, it is extreme difficultee,
Thyne owne wyfe, in court, to kepe in chastitee.
For flatteryng wowers, on euery syde appere,
And lusty galandes, of fayre dissimuled chere.
Some promesse golde, and gyftes great or small,
Some hasty galande, is yet before them all.
So many wowers, baudes, and brokers,
Flatterers, lyers, and hasty proferers.
Be alwaie in court, that chast Penolope,
Condescant among them, preserue her chastitee.
So great temptacion, no woman maie resist,
If heauenly power, her might doo not assist.
For craft and coyne, flattery, and instaunce,
Tourneth chaste myndes, to byle misgouernance.
Though she be honest, yet must thou leaue thy loue,
Syth princes courtes, continually remoue.
Then wheather she be thy wyfe, or concubyne,
Her care and dolour is great, and so is thyne.
For neither maiest thou, there styll with hyr abyde,
Nor leade her with the, or kepe hyr by thy syde.
Whan thou art gone, if she behynde remaine,

Than feare the troubleth, with tourmēt & wo paine.
Because that the mynde, of women is vnstable,
Alwaie thou doubtest, lest she be chaungeable.
And I assure the, if man be out of sight,
The mynde of woman, to returne is veary light.
Ones out of sight, and shortly out of mynde,
This is their maner, appere thei neuer so kynde.
Adde to al these, scorne and derision,
Which thou maiest suffre, and great suspection.
Infamy, sclaunder, and preuey Ialowsy,
These must thou suffre, without all remedy.
And other daungers mo, than a man can thynke,
Whyle other slepeth, the louer skant doeth wynke.
Who hath these proued, shall none of them despyse,
For children brent, stil after dredeth fyre.
Syth that these thynges, to all men be greuous,
They be to courtes, yet most dammagious.
Most painfull, noious, and plainly importable,
In court them kelyng, hath nothyng delectable.

Corydon.

I see the pleasure, of touchyng is but small,
I thought it hony, I see now it is gall.
Now speake on Cornix, I praie the brefely tell,
What ioy haue courters, in tastyng or tosmell,
For these two wyttes, in court be recreate,
Elles many wretches, be there infatuate.

Cornix.

The smell and tastyng, partly conioyned be,
And parte disioyned, as I shall tell to the.
For whyle we receaue, some meates delicate,
The smell and tastyng, than bothe be recreate.
The fragraunt odour, and ointment of swete floure,
Onely deliteth, the smellyng with odour.

Of meate delicious, gone is both smell and tast:
when it is chewed, and thorough the gorge past.
But they, which in mouth, haue pleasure principall,
Ar beastly fooles, and of liuyng brutall.
The famous shepheard, whom Nero dyd beheade:
Them greatly blameth, which beastly vse to feade.
Which, for their wombe, cheife care and labor take:
And of their bellyes, are wont their god to make.

Coridon.

☞ A god of the wombe, that harde I neuer eare:

Cornix,

☞ Coridon, thou arte not to olde for to leare.
I playnly shall now declare, for thy sake:
How beastly glottons, god of their wombes make.
To gather men wont, Temples to edifye:
And costly aulters, to ordeyne semblably,
To ordeyne ministers, to execute seruyce:
To offre beastes, by way of sacrifyce.
To burne in temples, well smellyng ensence,
Glottons to the wombe, do all this reuerence.

Coridon.

☞ They and their goodes, come to confusion:
Which forgeth ydolles, by suche abusion.
But proceede Cornix, tell on, in wordes playne:
How all these thynges, they to the wombe ordayne.
Which is in Templt, the aulter and insence,
And the ministers, to do their diligence.
Within the Temple, to kepe alway seruyce:
And to the belly, which is the sacrifice.

Cornix.

☞ To god of the Belly, glottons a Temple make:
Of the smoky kytchen, for temple it they take,
Within this temple, minister baudy kookes:

And

And yong scolions. with kendes of their lookes.
The solempne aulter, is the borde or table:
With dishes charged, twenty in a rable.
The beastes offered, in sacrifice or hoast:
In dyuers sortes, of sodden and of roast.
The sauce is ensence, or of the meate the smell:
And of this temple, these be the cheife vessell.
Platers and dysshes, morter and pot crookes,
Pottes and pestels, broaches and fleshookes.
And many moe is, than I counte or tell:
They know them best, which with the kytchyn mel
For god of the wombe, this seruyce men prepare:
As for their true God, full lytell is their care.

Corydon

¶ This lyke is beastly, and vtterly dampnable:

Cornix.

¶ But yet it is now, reputed commendable.
Princes and commens, and some of religion:
Vnto this temple, haue cheife deuocion.
To kookes and tauernes, some early frequent:
Then vnto seruyce, of God omnipotent.
Fyrst, serue the belly, then after, serue our Lorde:
Suche is the worlde, though it doo yll accorde.
And suche as delyteth, in beastly glotony:
Foloweth the court, supposyng stedfastly.
With meate & with drinke, to stuffe well the paunche,
Whose lust insaciate, no floude of hell can staunche.
And for that Princes vse, costly meate and wyne:
These fooles suppose, to fede them with as fyne.
To eate and to drinke, as sweete and delicate:
As doth their Princes, or other great estate.
Lykewyse as flyes, do folow and thycke swarme:
About fat paunches, vnto their bytter harme.

So

So such men as haue, in glotony conforte:
To Lordes kytchyns, most busely resorte.
With hongry throtes, yet go they ofte away:
And oft haue the flyes, much greter part then they.

Corydon.

¶ Then tell on Cornix, what confort and pleasour,
Men fyndeth in court, in tastyng and sauour.
With meate and drinke, how they their wombes fyll.
And whether they speade, at pleasure and at wyll.

Cornix.

¶ To eate and to drinke, then is most ioy and lust:
When men be hongry, or greued sore with thurst.
But oft vnto noone, must thou abyde respyte:
Then tourned is honger, to dogges appetyte.
For playne woode hungry, that tyme is many one:
That some wolde gladly, be gnawyng of a bone.
On which vile curres, haue gnawen on before:
His purse is empty, and honger is so sore.
Or some, by feblenesse, & weary tarying:
Lease their appetyte, that they can eate nothyng.
Some other hath eaten, some bread and chese before:
That at their dyner, they lust to eate no more.
Their stomake stopped, and closed with some crust:
From them haue taken, their appetite and lust.
Then other courters, of maners bestiall:
With gredy mouthes, deuoureth more then all.
Thus some at risyng, be fuller then be swyne:
And some for hongre, agayne may syt and dyne.
Sometyme togither, must thou bothe dyne and suy:
And sometyme thou dynest, before the sonne be vp.
But if thou refuse, to eate before day lyght,
Then must thou tary, and fast tyll it be nyght.
To eate or to drinke, then is it small delyte:

When no disgestion, hathe styzed appetyte.
Agayne art thou set, to souper all to late:
All thyng hath season, which men of court not hate
For neuer shall thy meate, be set to in the season,
Wherof procedeth, muche sore veracion.
Ofte age intestate, departed sodeinly:
And lusty galaundes, departeth semblably.
Hereof procedeth, the vompt and the stone:
And other sycknesse, many mo then one.
Sometyme is the wyne soure, watery and so bad:
That onely the colour, myght make a man be mad
Colde without measure, or hote as horse pysse:
Bad is the colour, the sauour baddest is.
But if in the court, thou drinke both beare and ale:
Then is the colour, troubled blacke and pale.
Thynke not to drinke it, in glasse, syluer nor golde:
The one may be stollen, the other can not holde.
Of a trien vessell, then must thou neades drinke:
Olde, blacke & rusty, lately taken from some synke.
And in suche vessell, drinke shalt thou often tyme:
Which in the bothome, is full of fylth and slyme.
And of that vessell, thou drynkest oft ywys,
In which some kates, or dames late dyd pys.
Yet shalt thou not haue, a cup at thy delyte,
To drinke of alone, at wyll and appetyte.
Coridon in court, I tell the by my soule,
For most parte, thou must drinke, of a comen boule
And where gresy lyppes, and slimy bearde,
Hath late ben deapyd, to make some man afearde.
On that syde must thou, thy lyppes wash also:
Or els without drinke, from dyner thou must go.
In the meane season, olde wyne, and dearely bought:
Before thy presence, shall to thy Prince be brought.

Whose

Whose smell and odour, so swete and marualous,
With fragrant sauour, inbaumeth all the house.
As muscadell, capzike, romney, and maluely,
From Genes, brought from Grece or Hungary.
Suche shall he drynke, suche shall to hym be brought,
Thou hast the sauour, thy parte of it is nought.
Though thou shulde perishe, for very ardent thrust,
No droppe thou getteste, for to eslake thy lust.
And though good wynes, somtyme to the be brought,
The tast of better, shall cause it to seme nought.
Oft woldest thou drynke, yet darest thou not suppe,
Tyl tyme thy better, haue tasted of the cuppe.
No cuppe is filled, tyll dyner halfe be done,
And some ministers, it counteth than to sone.
But if thou begyn for drynke, to call and craue,
Thou for thy callyng, such good rewarde shalt haue
That men shall call the, malaperte or dronke,
Or an abbey lowne, or lymner of a monke.
But with thy rebuke, yet art thou neuer the nere,
Whither thou demaunde wyne, palled ale, or bere.
yet shalt thou not drinke, whā thou hast nede & thrust
The cuppe must thou spare, ay, for thy betters lust.
Through many handes, shal passe the pece, or cuppe,
Before or it come to the, it is all dronke vp.
And than if a droppe or two, therin remaine,
To licke the vessell, sometyme thou art full fayne.
And than at the grounde, some fylth if thou espye,
To blame the butler, thou getteste but enuy.
And as men wekely, newe holy water poure,
And ones in a yere, the vessell vse to scoure.
So cuppes & tankerdes, in court as thou maiest thik
Where in the comons, are vsed for to drinke.
Ar ones in the yere, empty and made cleane,

And chaunt ly that well, as oft entyme is sene.
For to aske water, thy wynes to alley,
Thou shalte fynde no nede, if thou before assaei.
With rynsyng of cuppes, it tempered is before,
Because pure water, perehaunce is no tin store.

Corydon.

Cfye on this maner, such seruice I defye,
I see that in court, is vncleane penury.
yet here though our drynke, be very thyn and small,
We maie therof haue plenty, whan we call.
And in cleane vessell, we drynke therof pardie,
Take here the bottell Cornix, assaie and see.

Cornix.

CThan call for the priest, whan I refuse to drynke,
This ale brewed bentley, it maketh me to wynke.

Corydon.

CThou saiest trouth Cornix, beleue me by the roode,
No hande is so sure, that can alwaie make goode.
But talke of the court, if thou hast any more,
Set downe the bottell, saue some licour in store.

Cornix.

CGod blesse the brewer, well cooled is my throte,
Now might I for nede, syng higher by a note.
It is bad water, that can not alley dust,
And very soure ale, that can not quenche thrust.
How rouleth my tonge now, that I without paine,
Now here me, I enter into the court againe.
Beholde in the court, on comen table clothes,
So byle and ragged, that some his diner lothes.
Touche them, then shall thei vnto thy fingers cleaue,
And than must thou wype, thy handes on thy sleue.
So he, which daily fareth in this gyse,
Is so imbrued, and noynted in such wise.

That

That as many men, as on his skyrtes looke,
Count hym a skolion, or elles a greasy cooke.

Cozidon.

Cyet Cornix, againe, all courtyng I dekye,
Moze clennesse is kept, within some hogges stye.
But yet mate Cornix, all be not thus I wene,
For some table clothes, be kept white and cleane.
Fyner than sylke, and chaunged euery daie,

Cornix.

Cozidon forsothe, it is as thou doest saie.
But these be thynges, moste cheke and principall,
Onely reserued, for greatest men of all.
As for other clothes, which serue the comontee,
Such as I tolde the, or els viler be.
And styll remaine thei, vnto the planke cleauyng,
So blacke, so baudy, so foule, and yll semyng.
Of sight and of sent, vyle, and abhominable,
Tyl skant maie a man, discerne them from ỹ table.
But now here what meate, there nedes ete thou must
And than if thou maiest, to it apply thy lust.
Thy meate in the court. is neither swanne nor heron,
Curlewe nor crane, but cours beke and motton.
Fat porke, or veale, and namely such is bought,
For easier pryce, whan thei be leane and nought.
The flesh is resty, or leane, towgh and olde,
Or it come to borde, vnsauery and colde.
Sometyme twyse sodden, vncleane without tast,
Sauced with coles, and asshes all for haste.
Whan thou it eatest, it smelleth so of smoke,
Than euery morsell, is able one to choke.
Make hunger thy sauce, be thou neuer so nyce,
For there shalt thou fynd, none other sauce ne spice
Thy potage is made, with wedes, and with asshes.

And betwene thy tethe, oft tyme the coles crashes.
Sometyme halfe sodden, is bothe thy fleshe & brothe,
The water and herbes, togyther be so wrothe.
That eche goeth aparte, they can not well agree,
And oft be thei salte, as water of the sea.
Seldom at chese, hast thou a lytell lycke,
And if thou ought haue, within it shall be quicke.
All full of magottes, and lyke to the rainbowe.
Of diuers colours, as redde, grene, and yelowe.
On eche syde gnawen, with myse, or with rattes,
Or with vyle wormes, with dogges, or w cattes.
Uncleane and skurfy, and harde as the stone,
It loketh so well, thou woldest it were gone.
If thou haue butter, than shall it be as yll,
Or worse than thy chese, but hungar hath no skyll
And whan that egges, halfe hatched be almost,
Than are they for the, laied in the fyre to roost.
If thou haue peares, or apples by thou sure,
Than be thei suche, as might no more indure.
And if thou none eate, thei be so good and fyne,
That after dyner, thei serue for the swyne.
The oyle for friyng, is for the lampes mete,
A man it choketh, the sauour is so swete.
A cordwainers shoppe, and it haue equall sent,
Such payne and penaunce, accordeth best to lent.
Such is of this oyle, the sauour peryllous,
That it might serpentes, dryue out of an house.
Oft tyme thy stomake, it causeth to rebuke,
And oft it is ready, the sodainly co choke.
Of fishe in some court, thy chefe and vsed dyshe,
Is whityng, heryng, saltfishe, and stockefishe.
If the daie be solemne, parchaunce thou maiest fele,
The taste and the sapour, of tenche or ele.

Their

Their muddy sauour, shall make thy stomake ake,
And as for the eele, is ioyn to a snake.
But if better fysh, or any dyshes more,
Come to thy parte, it nought was before.
Corrupte, yll smellyng, and fyue dayes olde,
For sent, thou canst not, receaue it if thou wolde.
Thy bread is blacke, of yll sapour and tast,
And harde as a flynt, bicause thou none shuld wast
That shant be thy teethe, able it to breake,
Depe it in potage, if thou no shyft can make.
And though whyte and broune, be both at one price,
W broune shalt thou feede, lest whyte make the nyce.
The Lordes wyll alway, that people note and see,
Betwene them and seruauntes, some diuersitee.
Though it to them, tourne to no profyte at all,
If they haue pleasure, the seruant shall haue small.
The dyshes be one, continuyng the yeare,
Thou knowest what meate, before them shal apere.
This slaketh great parte, of lustes and pleasour,
Which asketh denties, much dyuerse of sapour.
On one dysh daily, neades shalt thou blow,
Tyll thou be as weary, as dogge of the bow.
But this myght be suffred, may fortune easely,
If thou saw not, sweete meates to passe by.
For this, vnto courters, most comenly doth hap,
That while thei haue broune bred & chese i their lap
On it fast gnawyng, as houndes rauenous,
Inone by them passeth, of meate delicious.
And coastly dyshes, a score may they tell,
Their gredy gorges, are rapte, with the smell.
The deintious dyshes, which passe thorough the hall,
It weare great labour, for me to name them all.
And Corydon, all if I woulde, it were but shame,

For

For simple shepheardes, suche deintyes to name.
With broune bread & chese, the shepheard is content:
And scant see we fysh, past ones in the lent.
And other seasons, soste chese is our foode:
With butter and creame, then is our dyner goode.
And mylke is our myrth, and speciall appetyte:
Ap̄les and plummes, also is our delyte,
These fyll the belly all, if we hongre sore:
When mā hath inough, what nedeth him haue more
But when these courters, syt on the benches ydle:
Smellyng those dysches, they byte on the brydle.
And then is their payne, and angre kell as gall,
When all passeth by, and they haue nought at all.
What fysh is of sauour, sweete and delicious:
Whil: thou sore hōgrest, thy prince hath plentious
Rosted or sodden, in sweete hearbes and wyne,
Or fryed in syle, most saporous and fyne.
Such fysh to beholde, and none therof to tast:
Pure enuy causeth, hye hart neare to brast.
Then seyng his dysches, of flesh new agayne,
Thy mynd hath torment, yet with much gret paine
Well maist thou smell, the pasteys of a harte:
And dyuers deinties, but nought shalbe thy parte.
The crane, the kesant, the peacocke and curlew,
The partrich, the plouer, bittore and heronsew.
Eche byrde of the ayre, and beastes of the grounde,
At princes tables, shalt thou beholde habounde,
Seasoned so well, in licour redolent,
That the hall is full, of pleasaunt smell and sent.
To see such dysches, and smell the sweete odour,
And nothyng to tast, is vtter displeasour.

Corydon.

YEs, somewhat shal come, who can his tyme abyde

And

And thus may I warne, my felow by my syde.
What, eate soft dromo, and haue not so great hast,
For shortly we shall, some better morsell tast.
Soft man, and spare thou, a corner of thy belly,
Anone shalbe sent vs, some lytell dysh of ielly.
I legge of a swan, a partrich or twayne,

Cornix.

Nay nay Corydon, thy bidyng is in vayne.
Thy thought shall vanysh, such dyshes be not small,
For comen courters, of them hath nought at all.
To thy nert felow, some morsell may be sent,
To thy displeasure, great anguysh and tourment.
Wherby in thy mynde, thou maist suspect and trow:
Him more in fauour, and in conceyt then thou.
And sometyme to the, is sent a lytell crap,
With sauour therof, to take the in a trap.
Not to aley, thy honger and desyre,
But by the swetnesse, to set the more on fyre.
Besyde all this sorow, increased is thy payne,
When thou beholdest, before thy Lorde pein mayne
A baker chosen, and waged well for the,
That onely he shoulde, that busines applye.
If thou our manchet, dare handle other touche,
Because of dutye, to thrust it in thy pouche.
Then shall come slouen, the dash on the eare,
Thou shrinkest for shame, thy bread leauyng there

Corydon.

My bagge full of stony, and hooke in my hande,
Should geue me a courage, such boldly to wstand

Cornix.

Not so Corydon, they fare lyke to curres,
Together they cleaue, more fast then doo burres.
Though eche one with other, oft chyde, brall & fyght.

Agaynst a poore straūger, they shew al their might
It is a great mastery, for Corydon alone,
To stryue or contende, with many mo then one.
A straw for thy wysdome, and artes liberall,
For fauor and coyne, in courte, worketh all.
Thy Princes apples, be sweete and orient,
Such as Minalchas, vnto Amintas sent.
Or suche as Agros, dyd in his kepyng holde,
Of fragrant sapour, and colour lyke pure golde.
In sauour of whom, thou only hast delyte,
But if thou woldest dye, no morsell shalt thou byte.
His chese is costly, fat, pleasant and holsome,
Though thy teeth water, thou eatest not a crome.
Upon the sewer, well maist thou gase and gape,
Whyle he is fylled, thy honger is a iape.
Before thy Souereigne, shall the karuer stande,
With dyuers iesture, his knyfe in his hande.
Dismembryng a crane, or somewhat deintious,
And though his parsell, be fat and plentious.
Though vnto dyuerse, thou see him cut and kerue,
Thou gettest no gobbet, though thou shuld dye and sterue.
In all that thy syght, hath delectacion,
Thy gredy tastyng, hath great veracion.
What man will beleue, that such a wretched thyng
A courter may fynde, his pleasure or liuyng.
What man is he, but rather wolde assent,
That in such liuyng, is anguysh and tourment.
May not their tourment, be well compared thus,
Unto the tourment, of wretched Tantalus.
Which, as sayd Faustus, whose saiyng I may thynke,
In flood and fruites, may neither eate nor drynke.
Auncient Poetes, this Tantalus do sayne,
In hell condempned, to suffre such payne.

That

That vp to the chyn, in water doeth he stande,
And to his vpper lyppe, retche apples a thousand.
But whan he wolde drynke, the water doeth discend
And whan he wolde eate, the apples doeth ascend.
So bothe fruite and water, them kepeth a stent,
In middes of pleasure, haue courters lyke tormēt
But now to tell table, for to retourne againe,
There hast thou yet, another greuous paine.
That whan other talke, and speake what thei wyll,
Thou dare not whisper, but as one dome be styll.
And if thou ought speake, priuey or aperte,
Thou art to besy, and called malaperte.
If thou call for ought, by worde, signe, or becke,
Thā Jacke w the bushe, shal rant the with a checke
One reacheth the bread, with grutche & murmuryng
If thou of come other, demaunde any thyng.
He hath at thy askyng, great scorne and disdaine,
Because ỹ thou sittest, while he standeth in payne.
Sometyme the seruauntes, be blynde and ignorant,
And spy not what thyng, vpon the bord doth want
If thei see a faute, thei will it not attende,
By negligent scorne, disdainyng it to mende.
Sometyme thou wantest, other breade or wyne,
But nought dare thou ask, if thou shold neuer dine
Demaunde salt, trenchour, spone, or other thyng,
Than art thou importune, and euer more crauyng
And so shall thy name, be spred to thy payne,
For at the, shall all haue scorne and disdaine.
Sometyme art thou erked of them, at the table,
But much more art thou of the seruyng table.
The hungry seruers, which at the table stande,
Ateuery morsell, bath eye vnto thy hande,
So much on thy morsell, distract is thy mynde,

Thei gape, whan thou gapeſt, oft bitynge the wynd.
Becauſe that thy leauynges, is onely their parte,
If thou fede the well, ſore greued is their hart.
Namely of a dyſhe, coſtly and deintuous,
Eche pece that thou cutteſt, to them is tedious.
Than at the cupborde, one doeth another tell,
Se how he fedeth, lyke the deuell of hell.
Our parte he eateth, nought good ſhall we taſte,
Than praie they to god, that it be thy laſte.

Corydon.

I had leauer Cornix, go ſouperleſſe to bedde,
Than at ſuch a feaſte, to be ſo beſtedde.
Better it is, with cheſe and breade one tofyll,
Than with great deintee, with anger, and yll will.
Or a ſmall handfull, with reſt and ſure pleaſance,
Than twenty diſhes, with wrathfull countenance.

Cornix.

That can Amintas, recorde and teſtifye,
But yet is in court, more paine and miſery.
Brought in by diſſhes, the table to fyll,
But not one is brought, in order at thy wyll.
That thou wolde haue fyrſt, and loueſt principall,
Is brought to the borde, oft tymes laſt of all.
With breade and rude meate, whan thou art ſaciate,
Than cometh diſſhes, moſt ſwete and delicate,
Than muſt thou, other deſpiſe them vtterly,
Or to thy hurte, ſurfet, enſuyng glotony.
But if fortune, as ſeldome doeth befall,
That at begynnyng, come diſſhes beſt of all.
Or thou haſt taſted, a morſell, other twaine,
Thy diſſhe out of ſyght, is taken ſone againe.
Slowe be the ſeruers, in ſeruyng in alwaie,
But ſwyft be they, after takyng thy meate awaie.

I ſpeci-

A speciall custome, is vsed them amonge,
No good dyshe, to suffre on borde to be longe.
If the disshe be pleasant, other fleshe or fyshe,
Ten handes at ones, swarme in the disshe.
And if it be fleshe, ten knyues shall thou see,
Manglyng the fleshe, and in the platter flee.
To put there thy hande, is peryll without fayle,
Without a gantelet, or els a gloue of mayle.
Among all these knyues, thou one of bothe must haue
Or els it is harde, thy fyngers hole to saue.
Oft in suche disshes, in court it is sene.
Some leaue their fyngers, eche knyfe is so kene.
On a fynger gnaweth, some hasty gloton
Supposyng it a pece, of befe or of motton.
Besyde these in court, mo paines shalt thou see,
At borde be men set, as thicke as thei maie be.
The platters shall passe, oft tymes to and fro,
And ouer the sholders, and head shall they go.
And oft all the brothe, and lycour fat,
Is spylt on thy gowne, thy bonet and thy hat.
Sometyme art thou thrust, for littell roume & place,
And sometyme thy felow, reboketh in thy face.
Betwene disshe and disshe, is tarry tedious,
But in ẏ meane tyme, though thou haue paine gre-
Neither maiest thou ryse, cough, spyt, or nese, (uous
Or take other easemēt, lest thou thy name maie lese
For such as this wyse, to ease them are wont,
In nombre of rascaldes, courters them count.
Of meate, is none houre, nor time of certeintee,
Yet from begynnyng, absent if thou bee.
Other shalte thou lose thy meate, and kysse the poste,
Or if by fauour, thy souper be not loste.
Thou shalt at least waie, rebukes soure abyde,

For not attendyng and failyng of thy tyde.
Onyons or garlyke, which stamped Testyles,
Nor yet swete lekes, maiest thou not eate ywys.

Corydon.

What forsake garlyke, lekes, and butter swete,
Nay rather, wolde I go to Cly on my fete.
We count these deintyes, and meates beary good,
These be cheke dishes, and rurall mennes food.

Cornix

Who court frequenteth, must loue the dyshes swete
And lordes dyshes, to hym are nothyng mete.
As for our meates, they maie not eate I thynke,
Because great lordes, maie not abyde the stynke.
But yet lordes syege, and rurall mennes ordure,
Be lyke of sauour, for all their meates pure.
As for commen meates, of them pleasour is small,
Because one seruyce, of them continuall.
Illaieth pleasure, for voluptuositee,
Wyll haue of dishes, chaunge and diuersitee.
And whan thou hast smelled meate, more delicious,
Thy course daily fare, to the is tedious.
Now iudge Corydon, if herein be pleasure,
Me thynke it anguishe, sorowe and doloure.
Continuall care, and vtter misery,
Affliction of herte, and wretched penury.
But many fooles thinke it is nothyng so,
Whyle they see courters, outwarde so gaily go.
The courser seruantes, cloth, syluer and golde,
And other lyke thynges, delyte they to beholde.
But nought they regarde, the inwarde misery,
Which them oppresseth, in court continually.
And as saieth Seneke, some count them fortunate,
Which outwarde appere, well clothed or ornate.

But if thou beholde, their inwarde wretchednesse
Their daily trouble, their fruitlesse businesse.
Then woulde thou count them, bothe vile & miserable
Their roume and office, both false and deceauable.
For lyke as men paynt, olde walles ruinous,
So be they payuted, their lyfe contrarious.
And therfore all they, which serue in court gladly,
For tast or smellyng, or spice of glotony.
Haue lyke more wretched, then burgeis or merchant,
Which with their wyues, haue loue & lyfe plesant.
Shepheards haue not, so wretched lyfe as they,
Though they lyue poorely, on cruddes chese & whey.
On apples, plommes, and drinke clere water depe.
As it were Lordes, reinyng among their shepe.
The wretched lazar, with clinkyng of his bell,
Hath lyfe, which doth the courters lyfe excell.
The caityf begger, hath meate and libertee,
When courters honger, in harde captiuitee.
The poore men beggeth, nothyng hurtyng his name,
As touchig courters, thei dare not begge for shame
And an olde prouerbe is sayd, by men most sage,
That oft ponge courters, be beggers in their age.
Thus al those wretches, which doth the court frequēt
Bring not to purpose, their myndes nor intent.
But if their myndes, and wyll were saciate,
They are not better, therby nor fortunate.
Then all be fooles, concludyng with this clause,
which with glad myndes, vse courtyng for such cause
Corydon.
Now truly Cornix, right plainly hast thou tolde,
Of court and courters, the paynes many folde.
And as I suppose, there can no more remayne,
Thy wyt and counsell, hath ryd me fro great payne.

If

If I had plenty, of treasure and richesse,
I should ear I went, rewarde thy businesse.
But neade oft hurteth, good maners commendable,

Cornix.

What man wyll gladly geue, that is not able
But one habundyng, in treasure and rychesse,
Is ware in geuyng, or yet to make promesse,
Thy wyll is ynough, syth that thy store is thyn,
I aske of the for, no farther then the skyn.
But long is to nyght, therfore I shall gladly,

Coridon.

What more, yet declare, of courtly misery.
Thou hast tolde ynough, by all these crosses ten,
Almast for to choke, vpon a thousand men.

Cornix.

That I promysed, right, wolde I shuld fulfyll,
Yet more shall I touche, if thou can holde the styll.
I sayde fyrst that some, but they be sowen thyn,
Resort vnto the court, there soules for to wyn.
For with great Princes, whyle suche men remayne,
They thynke by counsell, by busyneste and payne,
Chefly to labor, for the vtilitye,
Of dyuers causes, touchyng the comentie.
Poore men supportyng, and chyldren fatherlesse,
And helpyng wydowes, also in their distresse,
So muche more weanyng, to please our Lorde therby
Bicause they contende, in payne and ieoperdy.
Of these must I cure, the myndes ignorannt,
Which be more fooles, then all the remenaunt.
All if they repute, them selfe neuer so sage,
Yet shall I proue them selfe, stuffed with dotage.

Coridon.

Declare that Cornix, that fayne wolde I heare:

We

We haue tyme ynough, yet doth the sonne appeare.

Cornix.

¶ Oft this forelayd sort, scante any fynde we shall:
But that requyreth, some lucre temporall.
But neuertelesse, nowe feyne we such a one,
Which seketh in court, for no promocion.
But onely intende, there soules for to wyn:
And as a champion, to fyght agaynst syn.
Shulde wyse men suppose, in court so to preuayle
Lost is their labor, their study and trauayle.
Or shulde a good man, which louerh honestie:
Put him in thraldome, or in captiuitie.
Of Princes seruyce, his sonle to wyn therby:
Say men what them lyst, me thinketh the contrary
For in court required, so many a syn and vice,
And so many wayes, from vertue to attyse.
And so many meanes, leadyng to viciousnesse:
That there may a man, scant byde in his goodnesse
For as a bad horse, resty and flingyng:
Oft casteth a man, though he be well sittyng.
In lyke maner wyse, man vnrightwyse:
Resortyng to court, discendeth vnto vyce,
All if his reason, and wylle also deny,
In court, hath the fende, suche fraude and policy.
By meane that vices, haue there no punyshment,
For lust and sufferaunce, make myndes insolent.
But synne, and synners, lye daily so in wayte,
Agaynst good lyuyng, to lay their deadly bayte.
That the best lyuers, from way of grace declyne:
By their occasion, impellith to ruyne.
He falleth in rockes, and peryll consequent,
By force of tempest, and wyndes violent,

Corydon.

☞ What, man in court, is neither rocke nor sande,
Difficulely thou speakest, and to vnderstande.

Cornix.

☞ I speake in parable, or by similitude,
Who not perceyueth, his reason is but rude.
But mate Corydon, I tell the before,
That what I shall say, or yet haue close in store.
Of dyuers auctors, I learnyd of Codrus,
And he it learned, of shepheard Siluius.
This Codrus sayed, that Plato the great sage,
Of Athenence court, aduertyng the outrage.
Purposyng rather, to flie to solitude,
Then lyue in honour, among suche vices rude.
Then know well thy selfe, what so euer thou be,
Which to sue the court, hast thy felicitie.
And note if thy selfe, be better then Plato,
Note well the powre, if thou haue wyll also.
As well as Plato, yll custome to refrayue,
If thou so thynkest, thou thynkest thyng in vayne,
In court, must a man, sayle after euery wynde,
Him selfe conformyng, to euery mans mynde.
Serue euery season, conforme him to the tyme,
Be comon with mo, though it be in some cryme.
He must rule nature, and yet wot not whither,
After the season, now hyther, now thyther.
And in his maner, he must direct his lyfe,
With heuy persones, him must he shew pensyfe.
With men at layser, which wyll them recreate,
He must be ioconde, after their vse and rate.
With aged persones, he must him haue sadly:
With youth behaue him, ioconde and merely.
With auenturous men, which seke on crueltie,
He must shew him blood, and of audacitie.

With

With liuers beastly, inluyng carnall lust,
Lyue lecherously, forsothe he nedes must.
And who so refuseth, than is his nature wrong,
He shall not in the court, ryse nor continue long.
But Corydon, thou might obiect vnto me more,
That the said Plato, which fled from court before.
Came long whyle after, and was in the seruice,
Of Dionisius, the Tyran of Silyce.
It is as thou saiest, but harken to the ende,
This Tyrans vyce, whyle he dyd reprehende.
All if the Tyran count his name diuyne,
As vnder coloue, to folowe his doctryne.
The cruell Tyran, his malice to fulfyll,
Solde this same Plato, mawgre his mynde & wyl
But thus entreated, was Plato not alone,
The wrathe of princes, proued haue many one.
And namely of such, as wysest were ywys,
As zenon murdred, by Tyran Phalaris.
His godly wisdome, nor honour of his age,
Coude hym not socoure, so dyd the Tyran rage.
Arracreontes, sometyme of Cypres kyng,
Slewe Anaragoras, for all his great connyng.
And by commaundement of Theodoricus,
Without all mercy, slayne was Boecius.

Corydon.

¶ These be farre mattiers, and thynges beary olde,

Cornix.

¶ Euen such thei be, as Codrus to me tolde.
And yet many mo, he counted to me plaine,
Of worthy clerkes, whom fel princes hath slayne.
But all to recount, me thynke it is not best,
That alketh leyser, the sonne is nere at rest.
Scant tyme remaineth, to tell that is beside.

Except we purpose, here all the nyght abyde.

Cordon.

Late at our church ale, syr Sampson to me tolde,
A tale of Moyses, and other Prophetes olde.
How the same Moyses, and many of lyke sort,
To princes courtes, dyd oftentyme resorte.
He saied that Moyses, though he of tonge were rude,
Left his goie flocke, behynde in solytude.
And he with Aaron, togyther bothe dyd go,
On goddes message, vnto kyng Pharao.
Also syr Sampson, reconnted vnto me,
A lyke narracion, of prophete Helyse,
But Cornix, my mynde is much oblinious,
And long hystories, to here be tedious.

Cornix.

As touchyng Moyses, and many prophetes mo,
I graunt, thei were wont to princes for to go.
These men were godly, it foly were to saie,
That all men shulde haue, such priuilege as they.
These were messangers, of god of Israell,
And fynde can we not, that thei in court dyd dwel.
But when thei had saied, goddes commaundement,
They left bothe court and princes incontinent.
Joseph alonely, abode with Pharao,
The ordinance of god, had erst disposed so.
To helpe his nacion, in tyme after to come,
By his prouision, and maruelous wisdome.
I graunt the also, Nawricius and Martyne,
Sebastian, George, and other men diuyne.
Serued in court, and vsed chiualry,
And neuertheless, they liued holely.
But this Nawricius, dyd christened become,
And with his legion, receaued martyrdome.

Lyke

Lyke wyse saint George, and saynt Sebastian,
Dispysyng ydolles, which courtes vsed than.
Suffred harde deathe, by manyfolde tourment,
For loue and true faith of god omnipotent.
But duryng the tyme, these dyd in the court remaine
No names of saintes, men gaue to them certayne.
And holy Martyn, whan he was come to age,
Gaue ouer the court, and fixed his cowrage.
In goddes seruice, remainyng stedfastly,
For he perceaued, and knewe right perfitely.
That of poore widowes. and chyldren fatherlesse,
The cause not entreth, into the court doubtlesse.
Their mattiers quealeth, for golde is all iustyce,
And euery speche, of ribaudry and vyce.
Also in courtes, of mercy founde is nought,
And of religion, no zele if it were sought.
Enuy possesseth the place of charitee,
Only Ambition, hath there auctoritee.
These vices to resyste, passeth humaine doctrine,
Man they ouercome, except wisdom diuyne.
If god doo not socoure, it passeth mannes might,
With such occasion, continually to fyght.
This knew saint Martyn, by light continuall,
Yet nought him moued, by help celestiall.
And though he liued, in court right holely,
He wolde no longer, ensue that chiualry.
For leaue example, to other men to come,
To lyue, where reigneth no vertue nor wisdome.
As whan it was asked, of Chryst our sauiour,
What shulde a man doo, of penaunce or labour.
Or other dedes, to wyn eternall blysse,
He bydde not a man, ren to the court ywysse.
He saied not, go folow a prince, or lorde or kyng,

But go sell thy richesse, and other worldly thyng.
Despyse all the worlde, and worldly vanitee,
For so haue I done, than come and folow me.
In this cause, our lorde hath made no mencion,
Of folowyng the court, for vayne promocion.
Than let men take hede, though thei be vertuous.
Lest whyle thei folowe a thyng so perilous.
In court supposyng, their soules for to wyn,
Lest there thei lose them, by fallyng into syn
For there be snares, and gyles infinite,
The fende is ready, occasion to excyte.
In euery corner, some enuy shalt thou mete,
And stomblyng stones, lye hyd before thy fete.
Full harde is it there, Ambicion to refraine,
Auaryce to slake, it is a great payne.
To tame enuy, and wrath to mitigate,
And in occasyon, vnclenlynesse to hate.
Harde is it daily to be among these same,
And none of them all, thy pleasure to inflame.
But if there be any, which can his lust subdue,
Among all vyces, to kepe them in vertue.
As a precious stone, cleane in the middes of myre,
Or lye in flames, not greued with the fyre,
Or touche soft pytche, and not his fyngers fyle,
If such one be found, within a thousand myle.
I wyll not deny, but that he maie well sue,
After court, and folowe, not hurtyng his vertue.
So much more merite, shall such a man procure,
How much more he doeth, of ieopardy endure.
But this is my mynde, and sure opinion,
That such as resorte, vnto the court echone.
Be rather ouercome, by syn and vicyousnesse,
Than they can vyces, vanquysshe and represse.

For

For man of his nature, is apte to synne and vice,
And with great hardnesse, doeth vertue exercyse,
Example of chyldren, which if they haue their wyll,
Be lesse disposed to goodnesse, then to yll.
I heard Minalcas syng, this vnto his drone,
That scripture sayeth, that mankynde is not prone
In youth and age, his pleasure to insue,
In easye lustes, then hardnesse of vertue.
Therfore I counsell, thy selfe, my Corydon,
Amintas, Codrus, and shepheardes eche one.
And all of other men, which wyll them saue fro hell,
That none of them all, presume with court to mell.
For there is the soule, in ieoperdye by cryme,
And after lyke is lost, by surfet or due tyme.
For either must a man, vnto his Prince assent,
Laugh at his vices, and with them content.
Then lost is thy soule, els his fautes blame,
Then shalt thou, his eye agaynst the inflame.
As Cirus, the kyng, sometyme of Peecy lande,
Had one Arpolus, cheife frende of a thousande.
Bicause Arpolus, once blamed his offence,
The wrathfull tyran, by mad maliuolence:
Caused Arpolus, vnwarely at a feast,
To eate his Childrē, as they lyke meate were drest
And thus Arpolus, to his Chyldren was a graue,
For blamig ỳ prince, such reward maist thou haue.
Right so Cambises, in hasty furor slew,
The son of his frende, which was to him most trew
Bicause that his frende, him blamed for dronkennesse
Of suche examples, be many mo doubtlesse.

Corydon.

I haue heard Codrus, oft tymes testifye,
How Aristotle, Prince of Philosophy,

Sued

Sued the tentes, with laudes and honour:
Of Alexander, the mighty conquerour.

Cornix.

C Thou lytell knowest, what caused him do so:
Or if he freely, had libertie to go,
Truly I suppose, it was agaynst his harte:
And that he myght not, at lybertie departe.
But many other, right worthy hye honour:
Also insured, that mighty conquerour:
As Calistines, of hye discression:
And also Crito, which was his nurses son.
And balde Lichimachus, folowed him in fyght:
Which was a Philosopher, a eke a worthy knyght.
And many mo els, that I can count or tell:
But heare Coridon, what vnto these be fell.
For that Calistines, forbad men to honour:
Great Alexander, as god, of most valour:
After suche custome, as was in Persy lande,
Therfore had he cut, from body, foote and hande.
His nose and eares, of trenched were also,
His eyen out dygged, for to increase his wo.
Then, by commaundement of the conquerour,
Was thrust in to prison., to byde in more dolour.
Enduryng his lyfe, there euer to remayne:
But when Lisimachus, for to make short his payn,
Reched him poyson, his cruell conquerour,
Made him be throwen, to leons to deuour.
And at a banket, as earst was touched playne,
By Alexander, was the sayde Crito slayne.
For blamyng of him, bicause that he dyd blame,
His fathers deades, Philipphus, by his name.
Therfore Coridon, after my iudgement,
And as I beleue, thou wylt therto assent,

They

They all be fooles, which sue to court so soze:
For all such causes, as touched are before.
Or to wyn soules, be there content to serue:
Their owne soule puttyng, in daunger for to sterue
For other do they 'eke. and hunt about in vayne:
And their desyres. there shall they not obtayne,
Or that thing thei seke, which shal do them dãmage:
Els be they throwen, in such a blynde dotage.
That of two wayes, they chuse most ieopetdous:
All full of thornes, and businesse perillous.
All if they might well, to their desyre attayne:
By way more easye, more short and voyde of payne
Corydon.
☞ O merueilous matter, & well brought to an ende:
I can not be able, thy reason to commende.
Nor yet to the reward, the thyng that thou hast doue
Though I had riches, and wyt lyke Salomon.
Thou hast me saued, by counsell sapient:
Out of hell mouth, and many folde tourment.
But nowis it tyme, to draw to our cotage:
The day is ended, right so is our language.
¶ Finis.

Thus endeth the seconde Eglogue of the Misery of Courtes & Courters, and here begynneth the thyrde and last Eglogue of the Misery, and behauour of Courtes and Courters.

Cozidon.

After soze labor, sweete rest is delectable.
And after long night, day lyght is confortable
And many wordes, requyzeth much drynke,
The throte wel washed, then loue the eyen to wynke
This nyght with me, it pzoued other wyse,
I dranke to bedwarde, as is my comen gyse.
But suche rest had I, tyll it was on the morne,
As had my mother, the nyght that I was borne.

Cornix.

Of that I meruayle, for thou art wont alway,
To sleape and to snorte, tyll tyme that it be day.
But how happened this, now tell me Cozidon,
That thou had this nyght, so soze veracion.

Cozidon.

I was so drenched, with dreames a drad so soze,
I trow neuer man, was troubled so before.
Me thought in the court, I taken was in trap,
And there soze handled, God geue it an yll hap.
Me thought the scolyons, lyke fendes of their lookes,
Came some w whyties, some other w flesh hookes.
Me thought that they stoode, ech one about me thycke.
With knyues ready, for to fley me quycke.
So had I fleapyng, as moche of feare and drede,
As I shoulde wakyng, haue lost my skyn in dede.
With such a vision, I troubled was all nyght,
Wherfore I ioyed, what tyme I saw day lyght.
For as soone as euer, I heard the byrdes peepe.
For feare of dreames, no longer durst I sleepe.
But stert fro my bed, as lyghtly was I pzest,
Almost as a byrde, out flyeng from her nest.
So cought I my male, my bottell and my hooke,
And forthe with my flocke, anone my way I tooke.

But

But tell me Cornix, I pray the hartely.
What thyng, this my dreme, may note and signify
Cornix.
☞ I dreade lest some one, fulfylled with yll wyll.
Had heard our talkyng, and it reported yll.
Which may vs after, cause rather weepe then syng:
For yll wyll maketh, the worst of euery thyng.
But then doeth one thyng, well conforte me agayne:
Fyrst men ar wont, of that to dreame certayne:
Wherwith their myndes, in walkyng troubled be:
A straw for dreames, they be but vanitie.
And as for me, I no man discommende,
If the scabbed claw, the treuthe shall me defende.
But how Corydon, thy head is in thy lap,
What now, so early, begynnest thou to nap?
Corydone.
☞ Who hathe not slepte, nor rested all the nyght,
Must slepe by day, els shall his brayne be lyght.
But Cornix, if thou lyst, me for to kepe and wake,
Talke of some mattiers, agayne for Goddes sake.
For so shall the tyme, ouerpasse with lytell payne,
God knoweth, when we shall meete after agayne.
Cornix.
☞ I graunt Corydone, for recreacion:
Of court yet to haue, more communicacion.
Corydone.
☞ All Misery of Court, thou hast all ready tolde,
Cornix.
☞ Nay nay Corydone, not by a thousande folde.
We shall haue mattier, nere tyll this yeares ende,
To talke of courtes, if I myght it intende.
But this one day, of parte, well may we talke,
As for the other, I force not, let it walke.

Coridon.

Than lyt down Cornix, lean here againe this bāke
As for our talkyng, we get but litteli thanke.

Cornix.

We get as much almost, as we deserue,
I loke for no thāk, nor meate, though I shuld sterue
In court, shall men fynde, yet many paynes mo,
Some shall I touche, let all the other go.
Because that of slepyng, was our fyrst communing,
Here now what paines, haue courters in slepyng.
They oft entyme slepe, full wretchedly in paine,
And lye all the night, forth in colde wyne and rain.
Somtyme in bare straw, on bordes, groūd or stones,
Tyll bothe their sydes ake, and all their bones.
And whan that one syde aketh, and is wery,
Than tourne the other, lo here a remedy.
Or elles must he ryse. and walke hym selfe a space,
Tyll tyme his ioyntes, be settled in their place.
But if it fortune, thou lye within some towne,
In bedde of feathers, or els of easy downe.
Than make the ready, for flyes, and for gnattes,
For lyse, for fleas, punaises, myse and rattes,
These shall with bytyng, with stynkyng dyn & sound,
Make ỳ worse ealment, thanik thou laie on groūd.
And neuer in the court, shalt thou haue bedde alone,
Saue wh thou woldest, most gladly lye with one.
Thy shetes shall be vncleane, ragged, and rent,
Lothely vnto syght, but lothlyer to sent.
In which some other, departed late before,
Of the pestilence, or of some other sore.
Such a bedfelowe, men shall to the assigne,
That it were better, to slepe among the swyne.
So fowle and scabed, of harde pymples so thyn,

That

That a man might grate, hard crustes on his skyn,
And all the night long, shall he his sydes grate,
Better lye on ground, than lye with such a mate.
One cougheth so faste, another breth doeth stynke,
That duryng ỹ night, skãt maiest thou get a wynke
Sometyme a leper, is signed to thy bed,
Or with other sore, one greuously bested.
Sometyme thy bedfelowe, is colder than is yse,
To hym than he draweth, thy clothes with a tryse.
But if he be hote, by feuers than shall he,
Cast all the clothes, and couerlet on the.
Other is thy felowe, alwaie to the greuous,
Or els thou to hym, art alwaie tedious.
And sometyme these courters, then more to encomber
Slepe all in one chamber, nere twenty in numbre.
Than it is great sorow, for to abyde their showt,
Some kert, some flyngeth, and other snort & rowt.
Some boke, & some bable, some cometh dronke to bed,
Some braul, & some iangle, when thei be beastly fed
Some laugh, & some crye, eche man wil haue his wil.
Some spue, and some pysse, not one of them is styl.
Neuer be thei styll, tyll mydes of the night,
And than some brauleth, & for their beddes fight.
And oft art thou signed, to lodge nere the stable,
Than there shalt thou here, of rascoldes a rable.
Sometyme shalt thou here. how thei eche other smite
The neyng of horses, and how eche other byte.
Neuer shall thou know, thy lodgyng or thy nest,
Tyll ayl thy betters, be setled and at rest.
In ynnes be straungers, and gestes many one,
Of courters lyues, make there conclusion.
And where thei be knowen, of neather man nor wyfe,
Oft tymes courters, there ende their wretched lyfe.

Then shall the hostelar, be their executour,
Or suche other ribaude shall, that was his deuour.
Watkyng the tapster, come gay and feat,
His shyrt, his doublet, or bonet to excheate.
For flesh that he bought, and payed nought therfore,
Then is she extreme, for he shall come no more:
But a comen Inne, if that thou lodge or lye,
Thou neuer canst lay vp, thy geare so priuely:
But either it is stoine, or chaunged with a thought,
And for a good, thou hast a thyng of nought.
For some errant theues, shall in thy chaumbre lye,
And whyle thou slepest, they ryfle shall priuely.
All if thou thy pouche, vnder thy pillow lay,
Soue one crafty searcher, there at shall haue assay.
Baudes and brothels, and flatteryng tapsters.
Juggelers and pypers, and scurfy wakerers.
Flatterers, and hostelers, and other of this secte,
Are busy in thy chambre, chattyng with none effecte,
With braulyng, they entre, fyrst pageaunt of the play,
That nought maist thou here, what wiser mē do say
Such is their shoutig, that scantly maist thou heare,
The secrete sclow, which by thy syde is neare.
But rurall flymmers, and other of our sorte,
Unto thy lodgyng, or court when they resorte,
They chat, they babyll, and all, but of the wombe,
More pert & more peuish, then thei wold be at home
Though thou wolde slepe, indurying all the nyght,
Some syng, some mourne, their lēman out of syght
Some syng of Betty, and some of Nan or Kate.
Namely when licour, disturbed hathe the pate.
The brotell boteman, and wretched labourer:
Cesse not to syng, be vittayle neuer so dere.
Who can with such, haue quyetnesse or rest.

But

But if thou with slepe, at last be oppzest.
And that sozе labours, to slepe the constrayne,
Rumour the rayseth, and wakened agayne.
On mozнyng, when thou might slepe most quyetly,
Then must thou aryse, there is no remedy.
Foz what tyme thy Lozde, vnto his hozs is pzest,
Then ought no seruaunt, lye in his bed at rest.

Cozidon.

☞ Now Cozнix I see, that with a bzaulyng wyfe,
Better were to byde. continuyng my lyfe.
And to heare chyldzen, cryyng on euery syde,
Then thus in the court, this clamoz to abyde.

Cozнix.

☞ No doubt Cozidon, but heare moze misery,
Which in their lodgyng, haue courters commenly.
Wen must wyn the Marshall, oz els harbegere,
With pzice oz wpzayer, els must thou stand arere.
And rewarde their knaues, must thou if thou be able,
Foz to assigne the, a lodgyng tolerable.
And though they pzomyse, yet shall thei nought fulfyl
But poynt the place. nothyng after thy wyll.
Either neare a pzineу, a stable oz a synke,
Foz sent z foz clamoz, wher thou can haue no wynke
After thy rewarde, they shall the so manace,
That mauger thy teeth, thou must resigne thy place
And that to some one, which is thy enemy,
If they be pleased, there is no remedy.
But yet foz certayne, it were thyng tollerable,
To becke, and to bow, to persones honozable.
As to the Marshall, oz yet the Herbegere,
Oz gentle persones, which vnto them be nere.
But this is a warke, a trouble and great payne,
Sometyme must thou stoupe, vnto a rude villayne.

Tailyng

Callyng him maister, and ofte claw chis hande,
All if thou woulde see him, wauer in a bande.
For if thou lyst in court, thou must reward this rable,
Cookes and scolions, and farmers of the stable.
Butlers and butchers, prouenders and bakers,
Porters and pollers, and specially false takers.
On these and all lyke, spare must thou none erpence,
But mekely with mede, bye their beniuolence.
But namely of all, it is a greuous payne.
To abyde the porter, if he be a villayne.
How oftentymes, shall he the yates close,
Agaynst thy stomake, thy forehead or thy nose.
How oftentymes, when the one foote is in,
Shall he by malyce, out thrust the by thy chyn.
Sometyme his fader, sometyme his clubbysh fete.
Shall dryue the backewarde, & turne the to ỳ strete
Whan he the seyth, comyng if he syt,
How often tymes, shall he the yates shyt.
For very pleasure, and ioy of thy comyng.
The yates be closed, lo here a pleasaunt thyng.
All if thou hast, well rewarded him before.
Without, thou standest, in rayne and tempest sore,
And in the meane tyme, a rascolde or villayne,
Shall laugh the to scorne, thou bathyng in ỳ rayn.
Sometyme the porter, his malyce shall excuse,
And say vnto the, thy labour to abuse.
That either is the Lorde, a slepe or in counsell,
Then lost is thy labour, misspent is thy trauell.

Corydon.

¶ Of our poore houses, men sone may know the gyn,
So at our pleasure, we may go out and in.
If courtes be such, me thynketh without dout,
They best be at ease, which so remayne without.

For

For better be without, wette to the skyn with rayne.
Then euer in court, and lyue in endlesse payne.
For if hell yates, dyd not styll open gape,
Then wretched soules, gret tourment shuld escape
Right so, if the court were close continually,
Some men shulde escape, great payne and misery.
But Cornix, procede, tell on of courters care:

Cornix.

Well sayde Corydon, God geue the well to fare,
Now woulde I speake, of paynes of the warre,
But that me thynketh, is best for to defarre.
For if thy Lorde, in battayle haue delyte,
To sue the warre, be paynes infinite.
For whyle he warreth, thou maist not abyde at home,
Thy lust to cherysh, and pleasure of thy wombe.
To sue an armye, then hast thou wretched payne,
Of colde or of heate, of thurst, honger and rayne.
And mo other paynes, then I wyll specify,
For nought is in warfare, saue care and misery.
Murder, and mischeif, rapynes and cowardyse,
Or els crueltie, there reygneth nought but vyce.
Which here to recount, were long and tedious,
And to our purpose, in parte contrarious.
Therfore let passe, the warres misery,
The dreadefull daungers, and wretched penury.
And of their Cities, talke we a worde or twayne.
In which no man, can lyue auoyde of payne.
For whyther so euer, the court remoue or flyt,
All the veracions, remoue alway with it.
If thou for solace, in to the towne resorte,
There shalt thou meete, of men, as bad a sorte.
Which at thy clothyng, and the shall haue disdayne,
If thou be busy, the club shall doo the payne.

There be now customes, and actes in lykewyse,
None maist thou scorne, nor none of them dispyse.
Then must thou eche day, begynne to lyue on new,
And do as they do, be it false or trew.
As for in Cities, I wyll no more remayne,
But tourne my talkyng now to the Courte agayne.
After of this, we may haue communication,
Of Citizens, and of their veracion.
Whether that thy Lorde syt, or yet stande erect,
Styll mayst thou stande, or els shalt thou be checte
Thy head and legges, shall fynde no rest nor ease,
If thou in Courte, intende alway to please.
Oft must thou becke, styll stande, and euer bare,
To worse then thyselfe, which is a payne and care.
What shall I commune, the penyfenesse and payne,
Of Courters, or they, that wages can obtayne.
How much differryng, and how moche abatyng,
Must Courters suffre, and manifolde checkyng.
Neuer hast thou the whole, sometyme shall they abate
Or els shall the day, of paiment be to late.
From Robert to Jhon, sometyme they shall the sende,
And then none of bothe, to pay the, may intende.
From post vnto pyller, tossed shall thou be,
Scorned and blynded, with fraude and subteltie.
Some mayst thou beholde, sighyng for great sorow,
When he is appoynted, to come agayne to morow.
For many a morow, hath he ben serued so,
Another standeth, his harte replete with wo.
Countyng and tournyng, his grotes in his cap,
Praiyng God to sende, the payre an euyll hap.
For where he reckened, for to receyue a pounde,
Scant hath he halfe, suche checkes be theee founde.
Neuer shall the Court, receyue whole salary,
Excepte that he reward, the payer priuely.

Whan nede constraineth, somewhat to haue before,
He gladly receaueth, a dosen for a score.
Neuer canst thou make, the couenaunt so clere,
But that the payer, shall bryng the farre arere.
All if thou right well, thy couenaunt fulfyll,
It shall the payer, interprete at his wyll.
For all that blynde sort, are choked with auarice,
As cratchers of coyne, enlewyng couetyse.
But somewhat to speake, of thynges necessary,
These doo all courters cares, multiply.
Now for one thyng, thei labour to obtayne,
Now for another, and often all in vayne.
And though their askyng, be neither right, nor iust,
yet neuer stynt thei, tyll thei haue had their lust.
But if it fortune, their prayer and their coste,
Be spent all in vayne, than is their reason loste.
Than lurke they in corners, for a moneth or twayne,
For wo that their labour, and prayer was in vaine.
Some with their prynces, so standeth in fauour.
That thei maie auaunce their kynred to honour.
But than is their kynred, so bad of gouernance,
That all if thei maie, thei dare not them auance.
But how be it they durst, thei drede of worldly shame
Or punishment of god, or els their princes blame.

Corydon.

Now doutlesse Cornix, that man is much vnwise,
Which liketh fooles, vnworthy to office.
But oft tymes fauour, and carnall affection,
Abuseth the right, blyndyng discression.

Cornix.

If thou had mused a yere, for this one clause,
Thou could not a saied, more parfitely the cause.
Beside this Corydon, kewe by the lorde aboue,

Haue of these courters, true, sure, and perfite loue.
For Codrus tolde me, what writeth Isocrate,
That all these princes, and euery great estate.
In louyng regarde, no vertue nor prudence,
None loue thei, but of some hasty violence.
Without auysement, without discrecion,
Such loue oft proueth, faint at conclusyon.
But if they loue any, they loue hym not as frend,
Betwene lyke & lyke, best frendshyp shal we fynde.
For truely great lordes, loue such men with delyte,
By them whan thei take, some pleasure or profyte.
As thei loue horses, dogges, and mo such,
What saied I? I lye, thei loue them not so much.
More loue thei a horse, or dogge, than a man,
Aske of Minalcas, the trouth declare he can.
For commonly as sone, as any man is deade,
Another is sone ready, for to fulfill his stede.
With mede, & with praier, his place is derely bought,
So oft haue princes, their seruice clere for nought.
But than if it fortune, a dogge or horse to dye,
His place to fulfyll, another must thei bye.
Yet litteil haue I saied, worse in the court thei fare,
Not onely thy lorde, shal for thy death nought care.
For thy long seruyce, oft shall he wisshe the deade,
Such is in court, thy salarye and thy mede.
Other for thy seruice, long and continuall,
Thou hast of thy lorde, receiued nought at all.
And whan thou art dead, with shorte conclusion,
Than quite is thy seruice, and oblygacion.
And oft shall thy lorde, sounde swetely forth this A,
A that this man, so sone is gone awaie.
If he had lined longer, a small season,
I shulde haue put hym to great promocion.

Or els if thy lorde, hath well rewarded the,
That thou hast liuelod, and rychesse in plenty.
Than if thou dye, beleue me for certayne,
He surely trusteth, for to haue all againe.
Scant any ryche man, by death hence now shall fare,
But that some great lorde, wil loke to be his heire.

Corydon.

That is no leasyng, but proued often true,
That causeth widowes, oft tymes, sore to rue.
But this hath ben sene forsothe, and euer shall,
That the greater fysshe, deuoureth vp the small.

Cornix.

A right true example, mate Corydon doubtlesse,
So mighty rulers, the symple folke oppresse.
But what care in court is, now here me Corydon,
Concernyng thy lorde, or maisters owne parson.
Of princes or comons, thou fyndest seldome tyme,
One perfytly good, and spotted with no tryme.
For all such thynges, as seldome tyme befall,
Tully was wont, them monstres for to call.
Than is a good man, more monster in dede,
Than is a weather, hauyng a double head.
And in lyke wyse, reherseth Iuuenall,
That if a man wolde seke, ouer the worlde all.
So many good men, vnneth fynde shall he,
As there be pates, in Thebes the citee.
That is to saie, vnder the cope of heauen,
Of parfite good men, scant shall a man fynd seuen.
And holy scripture, yet speaketh more straitly,
As sheapherd Dauid, doeth clerely testify.
He saied, our lorde, beholdyng on mankynde,
Coude skant one good, in all the worlde fynde.
Scripture recordeth, such causes many one,

That men be synners, and god is good alone.

Cozidon.

What now mate Cozmir, ah man god auowe,
Thou hast in some friers bosome, bene I trowe.
And spoyled some patche of his preachement,
Talke of the court, saue this in stoze foz lent.

Cozmir.

So was my purpose, thou nedest not obiect,
Of our fyrst purpose, these wozdes haue effect.
I tolde the befoze, by good auctozitee,
How bothe the poetes, and ozatours agree.
And holy scripture, that fewe men be parfite,
But bad in numbze, be truely infinite.
So if thy maister be bad, and wozthy blame,
Than art thou sozy, of his dishonest name.
Thy lozdes vices, and liuyng neglygent,
Shall greue thy stomake, if thou be innocent.
It greueth the, if he be couetouse oz harde,
Because he disdaineth, thy labour to rewarde.
And foz many thynges, faple by his negligence,
And fall to ruyne, foz sparyng of expence.
Agayne if thy lozde, be free and liberall,
Alwaie thou feareste, lest other men haue all.
His prodygall hande, oft vexeth sore thy harte,
Lest at the endyng, nought shall come to thy part.
And lest his treasure, in foly so be spende,
That nothyng remaine, to helpe hym at the ende.
But if he be geuen, to wzath and cruelree,
Thou feareste lest he rage, agayne thy kyn oz thee.
If he be meke, mylde, and sobze, thou art sozy,
Foz he not reuengeth, eche hurte and iniury.
And if he be harde, than dzeadest thou daungier,
When he procedeth, than standest thou atere.

If

If he be cowarde, then haſt thou great enuy,
Agaynſt his foes, for they continually:
Diſtroy his landes, and ſore his landes diſtayne.
When he for drede, dare nothyng doo agayne.
If he vſe chattyng, and often be talkyng,
Wel thou perceiueſt, the while his tong is walkyng
His priuey councell, he often doth detecte,
And much he ſpeaketh, which is of none effecte.
If he be ſecrete, and ſtyll, as one in clepe,
Thou ſayeſt he doubteth, that none can councel kepe
And the ſuſpecteth, as muche as other mo,
Then art thou greued, and full of care and wo.
If he loue wyues, and thou feareſt dronkenneſſe,
If he hate wyues, and thou blameſt his ſadneſſe.
And to his body, thou counteſt him nygarde,
Becauſe he wold kepe, his houſholde more harde.
To Venus actes, if he to much apply,
Thou ſayeſt, he to many, doth hurte and iniury.
If he hate women, and flye their pleaſure than,
Both thou and other, reputeſt him no man.
With few men, if he vſe familiaritie,
Thou art diſpleaſed of them, if thou not be.
If he be commen, to all indifferent,
Then is thy mynde, in lykewyſe diſcontent.
Becauſe he loueth, familier to be,
To euery perſone, as greatly as with the.
But if that thy Prince be good, and thou be nought,
Then art thou lykewyſe, ſore vered in thy thought.
Leſt that he ſhortly, thy ſeruyce may diſpyſe,
Becauſe he not lyueth, after thy leaude gyſe.
But if both he be good, and of all vyces clene,
Which is a thyng, that ſeldome tyme is ſene.
Then moueſt thou, for that he is not fortunate,

As he

As he is ordeyned, and after his estate.
Thy harte and mynde, all thou to him inclyne,
That all his troubles, and payne shall be thyne,
For this without doubt, I tell the Corydon,
That no father, is so tender ouer his son.
As is a good seruaunt, diligent and true,
Unto a noble Prince, endued with vertue.
And all if good fortune, to him be fauourable,
Yet styll thou dreadest, because it is vnstable,
This neuer shalt thou sleape, in peace and quietnesse,
But when thou wakest, thy rest is much lesse.

Corydon.

☞ Because thou recountest, of thy fidelitee,
Of maisters and men, which loueth honestee.
Now I remembre, the shepheard of the Fen,
And what care for him, demeaned all his men.
And shepherde Morton, when he durst not appere,
How his olde seruants, were carefull of their there.
In payne and pleasure, they kepe fidelitee,
Tyll grace agayne, haue him auctoritee.
Then his olde fauour, dyd them agayne restore,
To greatter pleasure, then they had payne before.
Though for a season, this shepheard bode a blast,
The greatest wyndes, yet slaketh at the last.
And at conclusion, he and his flocke certayne,
Eche true to other, dyd quietly remayne.
My hert sore mourneth, when I must specify,
Of the gentle Cocke, which sang so merily.
He and his flocke, were lyke in vnion,
Conioyned in one, without discencion.
All the fayre Cockes, which in his dayes crew,
When death him touched, dyd his departyng rew.
The prety Palace, by him made in the Fen,

The

The maydes, wydowes, the wyues and the men.
With deadly dolour, were perced to the harte,
When death constrained, this shepherde to departe
Corne, grasse and feldes, mourned for woand payne,
For oft his prayer, for them obtayned rayne.
The pleasaunt floures, for wo faded eche one,
When they perceyued, this shephearde dead & gone
The okes, elmes, and euery sort of dere,
Shronke vnder shadow, abatyng all their chere.
The mighty walles, of Ely monastery,
The stones, rockes, and towers semblably:
The marbyll pillers, and ymages eche one,
Swet all for sorow, whē this good cock was gone.
Though he of stature, were humble weake and leane:
His mynde was hye, his liuyng pure and cleane.
Where other fedeth, by beastly appetyte:
On heuenly foode, was all his whole delyte.
And shortly after, this Cocke was dead and gone:
The shepheard Roger, coude not byde long a lone,
But shortly after, false death stole him away,
His worthy reporte, yet lyueth tyll this day.
When shepe wer scabbed, this good shepherd was fain
With easy salues, their sore to cure agayne.
He nought pretended, nor shewed of rigour:
Nor was no wolfe, poore lambes to deuour.
When busshy or bramble, pylled the shepes skyn:
Then had he pitie, and kepte them close within.
Or in new fleeces, dyd tenderly them lap.
And with his skyrtes, dyd oftentymes them hap.
When he departed, his flocke for wo was faynt,
The foldes sounded, with dolour and complaynt.
So that their clamor, and crye be spred the Ile,
His death was mourned, from Ely forty myle.

 These

These worthy heardes, and many other mo,
Were with their wethers, in loue conioyned so.
That more they cured, by wyt and patience,
Then dredefull Dromo, can do with violence.
Therfore all heardes, vnto the wolde I trow,
Shulde laude their names, if vertue raygned now
But syth that connyng, and vertue neare be gone,
Now be they lauded, forsoth of few or none.
I let thy purpose, to make conclusion,
Vice liueth, vertue hath lyght oblition.
But speake on Cornix, yet is it long to nyght,
My mynde to disclose, causeth my hart to be lyght.

Cornix.

To laude these pastors, wherfore hast thou delyte,

Corydon.

All other shepheardes, to vertue to excyte.

Cornix.

Then be thy wordes, nothyng mispent in vayne,
But now to courtes, wyll I retourne agayne.
And namely for thou, hast spoken of connyng,
We lyst a lytell to comune of that thyng.
It is to clerkes, great pleasure certainly,
And recreacion, to geue them to study.
And some fynde pleasure, and recreacion.
In secrete study, and meditacion.
To wryte and to reade, in places solitary,
Whole in the Muses, his reason to apply.
To talke with Plato, with Tully or Virgyll,
With Aristotle, to commune at his wyll.
And other famous doctors, many one,

Corydon.

What man, all these, long past, be dead and gone.
Who wolde with suche depute, commune or talke,

To go where thei bee, shall fynde a wery walke.

Cornix.

¶Though thei be dead, yet alyue is their name,
These lawdes honour, their hye reporte of fame.
So men deuiseth, to speake with them in dede,
As often as thei, their noble workes reade.
But as for courters, as well erly as late,
Be of this pleasure, playne vtterly pryuate.
Though thei lyue ydle, their paynes infinite,
To godly warkes, them graunteth no respyte.
Alwaie in clamoure remaine they, and in preasse,
And lewde aquaintance, wil them no tyme release.
But if that they chose, some season secretly,
To some good study, their myndes to apply.
To write or to rede, anone some wretche is fayne,
And glad them to vexe, and to disturbe againe.
But if all other, be absent and at rest,
Than nere theyr chãbre, the kychen clerk is prest.
Janglyng his counters, chattyng hym selfe alone,
Thus seke all corners, quyet thou fyndest none.
So much on despyse, those noble oratours,
The famouse poetes, and excellent doctours.
And lyue among the auoyde, of vertues all,
That rather a man rude beastes, maie them call.
Of great estates, there is a blynded sort,
Which cause their sonnes, vnto the court resort.
That they maie in court, them selfe daily frequent,
In learnyng vertue, and maners excellent.
But better might thei saie, to learne all malyce,
All cursed maners, and euery braunche of vyce.
As pryde, disdayne, enuy, and ribaudry,
So be good maners, infect with villany.
For surely in courtes, be men most vicious,

Supportyng vyces, to vertue contrarious.
Dishonest language, is counted most lawdable,
One bosteth baudry, or glotony damnable.
No man there vaunteth, him selfe of honesty,
Of vertue, maners, of mercy, nor Pytee.
But other he ioyeth, of his mischeuous lyfe,
To haue defyled a virgyn, or a wyfe.
Or els to haue slayne, his foe or ennemy,
Or fraude committed, or craftye felony.
Which cursed maners, youth soner doeth insue,
Than godly liuyng, or maners of vertue.
Whan youth in vices, hath fixed their cowrage,
They by no meanes, shall leue the same in age.
Nor thynke not in court, to fynde a yong strypelyng,
Chast, sober, shamefast, or maners ensuyng.
All sueth vyces, all sue enormitee,
Such be the disciples, as their inkourmers be.
For true is the clause, rehersed of Terence,
That youth inclineth, than namely to offence.
Whan a lewde maister, hym moueth to enclyne,
By yll example, to daunger and ruyne.
For nature leadeth, to all enormitee,
Whan men so vseth, which be in dignitee.
Youth thynketh lawfull, and but a iocunde fyt,
Such vyce as elders, vse daily to commyt.
And as ponge braunches, sone rotte & putrify,
So youth corrupteth, by vices semblably.

Corydon.

¶ Be all ponge galandes, of these abused sort,
Which in yong age, vnto the court resort.

Cornix.

¶ Who entreth the court, in yong and tender age,
Are lightly blynded, with foly and outrage.

But

But such as entereth, of wyt and grauitee,
Bowe not so soone, to such enormitee.
But or they enter, if thei haue learned nought,
Afterward is cunnyng, ỹ lest part of their thought
In court it is counted vyce, to haue science,
And counted for rebuke, for to haue eloquence.
Thus haue men connyng, great heauynesse & payne,
Beholdyng them selfe, in court had in disdayne.
Their wyt despised, in meane tyme shall thei see,
That greattest mattiers ruled, nay, marred be.
Of such blynde fooles, as can not count nor tell,
A score, saue twenty, yet most of all suche mell.
But men vnlearned, of inwarde payne haue some,
When they beholde, that to the court be come.
Men groundly learned, in latyne commonyng,
The other harken, and vnderstande nothyng.
Than truely it is to them, a greuouse payne,
But neuertheless, of them haue thei disdaine.
But liuyng in court, and fleyng none offence,
What shal I common, what grutche of conscience.
Vereth the daily, right small is thy delyte,
When troubled conscience, vnquietly doth the byte
No payne is sorer, nor greuouser tourment,
Than to remembre, and call to thyne intent.
How many vyces, how great enormitee,
Hath the in thraldome, and in captiuitee.
Thyne owne conscience, is styll within thy brest,
As a tourmentour, depriuyng the of rest.
With priuey scourges, and payne intollerable,
Recountyng thy workes, and lyke abhominable.
Thou maiest not auoyde, ne from this enemy stert,
Flee where the liketh, he resteth in thy herte.
This is of courters, the deadly tourmentour,

With desperacion, them seking to deuour.
Sometyme their conscience, grutched is with gyle,
With theft, with murder, with lechery some while
Though their owne cõsciẽce thus turmẽt thẽ w pain,
To the same offences, retourne thei yet againe.
Their cõsciẽce grutchyng, to cause of grutch thei fall,
Thus styll them tourment, the furyes infernall.
I meane remembraunce, of manyfolde offence,
Continuall tourment, by grutche of conscience.
What shall I tell the payne of sodeyne feare,
Which doeth the myndes of courters, often deare.
Sometyme the lower, be greued with thretnyng,
And suffre paynes, whan they doo nothyng.
Sometyme whyle the court, is daunsyng in disport,
Or in other solace, their hartes to confort.
Anone cometh in, a soden messangere,
Affirmyng truely, some armed foes nere.
And that same armey, is nere at hande doubtlesse,
Than tourneth solace, to wo and heauinesse.
And whyle some princes, for pleasure hauke or hunt,
Such fearefull tidynges, to heare of thei are wont.

Coridon.

Such feare and dangier, doth happen commonly,
On all degrees, with sodein ieopardye.
For plowmen, sheapherdes, and citezyns also,
By warre, endureth great domage, losse and wo.

Cornix.

All other sortes, sometyme must stande afarre,
But courters must byde, all daunger of the warre.
Saue losse of goodes, for some haue nought to lose,
But this wyll I leaue, and turne to my purpose.
No gyftes is graunted of god, vnto mankynde,
Better than frendshyp, whan man it true may fynd

But

But ouer all the Court, no man shall fynde nor see,
True, stedfast, frendship, nor parfyte amitee.
For syth all courters, for most parte blynded bee,
With vicious liuyng, and all enormitee.
They haue no frendshyp, but conspiracion:
And to doo mischeif, confederacion.
For parfyte frendship is, when two men agree,
Or mo in worfkyng, some deade of honestee.
Some courters be founde, which seme ingenious.
Pregnant of reason, wyse, and laborious.
yet haue they but shadow, of vertue and goodnesse,
And not of vertues, the playne signes expresse.
Some seme liberall, but they insue rapyne,
Some seme very chaste, but they to pride inclyne.
Some semeth humble, which vseth glotony,
And some familier, which lyue in lechery.
In none maist thou see, one sparcle of vertue,
But twenty vices, shall that one gyfte insue.
In suche a meany, full of iniquitee,
Harde is to fynde, one worthy amitee.
But if thou in court, some honest man awayte,
Then with great rulers, is he made in conceyte.
If he from conceyt, and out of fauour bee,
Thou maist not with him, haue familiaritee.
Sometyme shalt thou see, suche drawen to tourment,
As be thy frendes, fautlesse and innocent,
And ofte thy enemy, in many a faulte culpable,
Thou shalt in the court, see hye and honorable.
To see thy good frende, byde death so wrongfully,
To sorow, and nought say, is a great payne truly.
But yet for thy lyfe, say nought, be patient,
Not onely whysper, lest thou haue lyke tourment.
Conuersaunt must thou be, with suche to thy payne,

Which

Which hath thy father, or els thy brother slayne.
If thou be busy, or squaryng of language,
Thou maist peraũture, walke on the same passage
And if thou in Court, to ryches so ascende,
That thou maist reteyne, men on the to attende.
Some of thy seruauntes, shalt thou oft tyme beholde
Leaudely disposed, to vyces many folde,
Some shall be theues, some dronkenner then swyne,
Some shall loue braulyng, or to lyyng inclyne.
Some slow, some glotons, some fall to ribaudry,
Auoutry, murder, with other villany.
Some be forgetfull, some pearte, some insolent,
Some craftlesse fooles, some proude & negligent.
If thou chaunge, supposyng, some better for to haue,
Thou voydyst a lubber, and hast agayne, a knaue.
And if thou haue one, with knanysshnesse infecte,
Then all the other, shall folow the same seete.
Agayne, if thy selfe, be poore and a seruaunt,
Thou shalt fynde thy maister, rude rash & ignoraũt
Alway complainyng, and neuer well content,
Oft askyng seruyce, in payyng negligent.
Of suche superflue, hasty and rigorous,
Enuious, dronken, vnstable and couetous.
Thus seruaunt, maister, gentleman and villayne,
Lyue all in Court, with misery and payne.

Coridon.

¶ Now trewly Cornix, that is a wretched lyfe,
Voyde of all pleasure, wrapped in payne & stryfe.

Cornix.

¶ Count all the townes, and officers eche one,
And none shalt thou fynde, without veracion.
What thynge they counsell, when Princes not agree,
To their aduisement, of most vtilitee.

What

What haue Chauncellours, of inwarde displeasour,
whē their letters writtē, to their Princes honour.
For the Common Weale, and sure vtilitee,
Can not passe forwarde, tyll they transposed bee.
From good, to right nought, corrupte for correcte,
What thynke controllers, whē they be daily checkt
The rulers of court, Vssher, and Seneschall,
Treasorers, Clerkes, and euery Marshall.
What payne haue these, eche one in his office,
When often ribaudes, them slaunder and dispyse.
Or some besy body, hauyng but small insyght,
Controlle their countes, be they neuer so ryght.
What payne haue chaplaynes, controlled in seruyce,
And Phisicions, when some their actes dispyse.
What knyghtes trompetours, and soudiers comenly
When Treasorers, their wages doth deny. (beke,
What payne haue cokes, which scant mayse the their
Without some rebuke, a checke or a reproke.
Corydon, in court, no roume is, trust thou me,
But that is wrapped, in great aduersitie.
But breife to say all, and make conclusion,
Right wysemen suffereth, great tribulacion.
The heauenly pleasure, to purchase and obtayne,
More suffereth courters, to purchase endlesse payne
I mell not with them, which of necessitie,
Agane their pleasure, must in the courtes be.
As besy suters, to purchase droit and ryght,
Which wolde be thence, right gladly if thei myght.

Corydon.

Beleue me Cornix, thou turned hast my mynde.
Farewell courtyng, a dieu pleasure vnkynde.
Thou playne hast proued, that all they fooles be,
Which folow the court, seekyng captiuitie.

And might elles where, an honest lyke purchase,
Hauyng sufficiance, and moderate solace.

Cornix.

CThan let all shepherde, from henke to Salysbery,
With easy richesse lyue well, laughe and be mery.
Pype vnder shadowes, small richesse hath most rest,
In greatest seas, most sorest is tempest.
The court is nought els, but a tempestous see,
Auoyde the rockes, be ruled after me.
There is more daunger, than is vpon the londe,
As swalowes, rockes, tempest, and quicke sonde.
Mere maydes syngyng, adusyng with their song,
Caribdis, Scylla, and sandy bankes long.
In it be cliffes of hardest Adamant,
To syn excitynge, yong fooles ignorant.
What shepherde, loueth pease and tranquilitee,
Or rest requireth, to lyue in vnitee.
Swete pease of hert, who euer doeth requyre,
Or helth of his soule, if any man desyre.
Flee from the court, flee from the court I crye,
Flee proude beggery, and solemne misery.
For ther is no rest, nor godly exercyse,
No loue of vertue, but vse of euery vyce.
As auaryce, lust, and beastly glotony,
Crueltee, malyce, ambicion, and enuy.
But namely Venus, or lust venerall,
To hyr vyle actes, plainly subdueth all.
Vpon which vyces, who fixeth his entent,
Hym selfe to defende, hath he no argument.
But that of all men, wyse, honest, and laudable,
He shall be conuict, of liuyng reprouable.
A naturall foole, of reason dull and rude,
Prokace Corydon, Thus doo I here conclude.

Corydon.

Corydon.

¶ Conclude mote thy lyfe, in blessed state of grace,
Myne owne hert Cornix, for this thy good solace.
But hast thou touched, all hole and parfytly,
Of court, and courters, the payne and misery.

Cornix.

¶ Nay nay Corydon, I tolde the so before,
Much haue I tolde, behynde is much more.
Their inwarde crimes, and vyce abhominable,
Their outwarde ragyng, in synnes detestable.
Their theft and fraudes, and their extorcion,
And of mysuers, their supportacion.
Their daily murder, and forsyng of women,
Fraudyng of virgins, pyllyng of symple men.
Auoutry, incest, and fornication,
And of good virgins, the deflouracion.
These and such lyke, dare I not plainly touche,
For all thes crosses, and syluer in my pouche.

Corydon.

¶ Than haste we hence, the sonne is nere at rest,

Cornix.

¶ Take vp thy baggage my mate, that now is best

Corydon.

¶ But tell me Cornix, one thyng or we departe,
On what maner lyfe, is best to set my harte.
In court is combraunce, care payne and misery,
And here is enuy, yll wyll, and penury.

Cornix.

¶ Suffrance ouercometh, all malyce at the last,
Weake is that tree, whiche can not abyde a blast.
But here now my counceil, I bydde the finally,
Lyue styll a shepherde, for plainly so will I.

Coridon.

That I shall Cornix, thy good counsell fulfyll,
To dye a shepherde, establed is my wyll.

Cornix.

So doo, or after thou often shall repent,
Poore lyfe is surest, the court is but tourment.

Coridon.

A dieu sweete Cornix, departyng is a payne,
But myrth reneweth, when louers meete agayne.

Finis.

¶ Thus endeth the thyrde and last Eglogue of the Misery of Courte and Courters, Composed by Alexander Barclay preest, in his youth.

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